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W. E. Jelf, B.D. = Jelf.
" 
A COMMENTARY

CHICAGO

ON THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN

BY

WILLIAM EDWARD JELF, B.D.

SOMETIME STUDENT AND CENSOR OF CHRIST CHURCH

AUTHOR OF 'A GRAMMAR OF THE GREEK LANGUAGE' ETC.

LONDON

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1877

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.



THE following Commentary was left in MS. by the late Rev. W. E. JELF, B.D., late Censor of Christ Church, Oxford, the author of 'A Grammar of the Greek Language' &c. The last entry is dated February, 1868.

It is difficult to detect the reasons which induced Mr. JELF to delay so long the publication of the Commentary, the greater part of which was in a state of forwardness for the press. Excellent as in many points we believe it to be, it has thereby lost the immense advantage of a last revision, with the additions and corrections which were evidently intended to have been made. And this is the more to be deplored, because the Author has left behind no notice either of the text intended to have been finally adopted, or of that which was really used. It is believed that the latter was that of Dr. F. H. Scrivener,¹ in the Cambridge Greek and Latin Texts (Cambridge, Deighton & Co., 1860). The present text has been constructed on that as a basis, excepting where the notes clearly pointed to a different reading. A list of these variations is subjoined.

The reader may, perhaps, be surprised that no other Grammar is referred to than the Author's own. The reason

¹ This is a reproduction of Robert Estienne's text of 1550, with addition of v. l. from Beza, the Elzevir edition, Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles.

probably is that Mr. JELF wished to call attention to a portion of his Grammar which had been comparatively overlooked. He more than once assured the Editor that the Greek Testament portion was the most original part of the work, and that on which he had bestowed the greatest care. To refer again in detail to the sources used there would only be to do the same work twice over. The references throughout have been corrected to the 4th edition (Parker, Oxford and London, 1866).

The Commentary seems to have been written for the special use of students preparing for Ordination, and for the younger clergy. There is no attempt to bring the 'apparatus criticus' up to the latest date. His acknowledged powers of logical and grammatical analysis peculiarly fitted Mr. JELF to deal with a writer like St. John, a full appreciation of whose meaning often depends on some minute and subtle distinction of tense or mood, on the presence or absence of an article and the like; whose logic is contained rather in the idea than in the words, and with whom the separate links which make up the chain of argument are so often apparently wanting. By a close grammatical analysis of the Apostle's words, and by bringing to light these hidden links of argument, the exposition here given will be found, *inter alia*, frequently to cut to the root some of the most prevalent errors of interpretation of the present day, especially those of the school which claims to follow most closely the very letter of Scripture.

The Editor is fully aware of the vast difference between the work in its present state and that in which it would have appeared had the lamented Author survived to complete it. But this can be no reason to withhold its publication. More

than almost any other, Mr. JELF sought for usefulness, and not for fame; and he would have considered it a full reward if these his labours should prove in some degree useful to thoughtful students of the New Testament, and especially to the clergy of the Church he loved, and which he strove to serve with so much zeal and earnestness.

W. W.

WITH a feeling of deep interest in the work now laid before the reader, I comply with the desire expressed by one near and dear to the writer of the Commentary, that I should add a few words to the prefatory comments of the Editor. It is but little that I have to say or need say. I am one of the many who had a deep regard for Mr. JELF, and who rejoice to have this last fruit of his many and successful labours.

The Commentary bears everywhere the marks of clear, careful, and independent thought, and will be a welcome aid to many a student of this most beautiful but profound Epistle. It is impossible not to feel some feelings of regret that the work appears without the last touches of the hand of the Author; but it cannot but be considered fortunate that one who has proved himself to be thoroughly well qualified for the duty should have been chosen as Editor. My time has not allowed me to read the notes very closely, but, so far as I may venture to form a judgment, the responsible work of Editor has been performed by Mr. WEBSTER faithfully, sympathetically, and well.

C. J. GLOUCESTER & BRISTOL.

GLOUCESTER: *December 11, 1876.*



VARIATIONS FROM DR. SCRIVENER'S GREEK TESTAMENT, 1860.

MR. JELF'S TEXT.		DR. SCRIVENER'S.
CHAP. VERSE		
I. 4	ἡμῶν B.E.T.	ἡμῶν
II. 6	οὕτως S.B.E.T.	οὕτω.
„ 12	commences new paragraph.	verse 13. In later editions Dr.S. commences the para- graph with v. 12.
„ 13	ἔγραψα ὑμῖν παιδία . . . L.T.	γράφω, κ.τ.λ.
„ 28	σχῶμεν L.T.	ἔχωμεν.
III. 1	+ καὶ ἐσμέν L.	omits.
„ 18	+ τῇ L.T.	omits.
	γνωσόμεθα L.	γινώσκομεν.
IV. 3	— χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐλη- λυθότα L.T.	inserts.
V. 7	— ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ usque ad γῆ L.T.	inserts.
„ 13	— τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ L.T.	inserts.
	πιστεύοντες (?)	καὶ ἵνα πιστεύητε.

Dr. Scrivener's text is that of Stephanus, 1550; the other letters indicate—
B. Beza, 1565; E. Elzevir, 1624; L. Lachmann, 1842-50; T. Tischendorf,
1859.



LIST OF AUTHORS QUOTED OR REFERRED TO.

In the case of the more ancient authors approximate dates are given; in the more modern the date is that of the publication of the book referred to.

B.C. born.	B.C. floruit.	B.C. died.	
...	540	...	Theognis.
...	520-485	...	The Orphic Hymns.
385	...	322	Demosthenes.
...	274?	...	Septuagint Version of the Old Testament.
A.D.	A.D.	A.D.	
...	100	...	Plutarch.
120	...	200	Irenæus.
160	...	240	Tertullian.
329	...	390	Gregory Nazianzen.
347	...	407	Chrysostom.
354	...	430	Augustin.
379	...	440	Socrates. Hist. Eccles.
672	...	735	Beda.
9th to 10th century.			Æcumenius.
10th to 11th "			Suidas.
...	...	1071	Theophylact.
1467	...	1536	Erasmus.
1463	...	1546	Luther.
1509	...	1564	Calvin.
1519	...	1605	Beza.
1525	...	1562	Socinus.
1528	...	1598	Stephanus (Robert Estienne).
1542	...	1613	Estius (William Hessels van Est).
...	...	1637	Cornelius a Lapide (Van den Stein).
1581	...	1643	Cyran (Verger de Hauranne).
1583	...	1645	Grotius (Hugo van Groot).
1613	...	1667	Jeremy Taylor.
1619	...	1684	Suicer (Jean Gaspar Schweitzer).
1683	...	1763	Wolf.
1687	...	1752	Bengel.
1697	...	1751	Crusius.
1721	...	1791	Semler.
...	1757	...	Baumgarten.
...	1779	...	Arnd.
1761	...	1839	Paulus.

A.D. born.	A.D. floruit.	A.D. died.	
1781	...	1855	Lücke.
1789	...	1850	Neander.
...	1842-50	...	Lachmann.
...	1839-41	...	Tischendorf, ^{1st} 2nd edit.
...	1843	...	Movers.
...	1844	...	Meyer.
...	1845	...	De Wette.
...	1855	...	Huther.
...	Besser.
...	1855	...	Ellicott on the Ephesians.
...	1857	...	Jelf's Bampton Lectures.
...	1866	...	„ Grammar of the Greek Language, 4th ed.

ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΥ

ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΚΑΘΟΛΙΚΗ ΠΡΩΤΗ.



Ὁ ἮΝ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ὃ ἀκηκόαμεν, ὃ ἐώρακαμεν Ι.

CONTENTS OF CHAP. I.—Vv. 1-4.

Subject and intent of the Epistle.

5. Nature of the Christian message.

6-7. Necessity of practical holiness.

8-10. Human holiness unable to stand by itself.

I. ὃ ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς] Christ in His pre-existent Godhead. The pre-existence of Christ without beginning is viewed by St. John as an *essential* part of Gospel truth. It is not that the possession of truth on such abstract points is as individually necessary to salvation as a belief in the doctrine of the Atonement, the Mediation, &c.—for many persons are by nature or education unable to grasp such a truth, and we are not to suppose that they will lose their salvation for lack of it—but where the mind has been sufficiently developed to lay hold on such mysteries, or, at least, where the mind has been directed towards them, there the possession of truth and the avoidance of error is necessary to our having laid hold of the revelation of Christ. On whatever point there is any belief at all in the mind, there it must be in harmony with Christ revealed to us. He who is without a truth by reason of his never having heard it,

or being unable to comprehend it, is not in antagonism on that point to the Holy Spirit of Truth. But he who holds *error* is in such antagonism, or he who purposely turns from any part of God's revelation, lest he should be at the trouble of making up his mind and standing by truth, has, of course, so far rejected the Gospel. For a Church, inasmuch as it is to guide men into truth, it is necessary that all truth should be set forth; and in proportion as truth is declined, and error admitted, in that degree the character and function of a Church is lost.

ὃ] denotes that St. John is viewing Christ in His Divine pre-existence, before He took upon Himself the human nature in which distinctions of gender obtain. The neuter gender denotes immaterial personality, the masculine or feminine material personality.

This phrase has been variously interpreted, according to the theological bias of the several commentators. It doubtless is in itself capable of more than one interpretation, and in such passages the probability of one or other of such interpretations being right is to be ascertained by the

τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν, ὃ ἐθεασάμεθα, καὶ αἱ χεῖρες
2 ἡμῶν ἐψηλάφησαν περὶ τοῦ λόγου τῆς ζωῆς· καὶ ἡ

obvious meaning of the passage, by the context, by other passages of Scripture, by what we know of the position and affairs of the early Church. Where all these coincide in pointing to one interpretation, the probability that this is right amounts to moral certainty.

The obvious meaning of the passage—that, I mean, which would occur to any man, even unacquainted with Christianity, when he first reads the words—would, I think, be the existence of the person spoken of from whatever point is signified by ἀπ' ἀρχῆς.

The context shows that these words denote some state of Christ distinct from that which was presented to the senses of man, and yet in some way connected with it—something which, though realised by the mind, was not an object of sight or hearing. And thus we get another clue from the context. Another clue to the meaning of the apostle is given us in the opening of his Gospel.

The heresy with which the early Church had to contend (to which also distinct allusion is made in chap. iv. 2 and 2 Epistle 7) makes it probable, that if the words themselves allow of it, they would contain an assertion of the true faith as opposed to Gnosticism; and reference to the same heresy may account for the accumulated assertion of the *real* existence of Christ.

The obvious meaning then of the words, the context, other passages of Scripture, and the position of the early Church, combine in favour of these words referring to the *pre-existence of Christ from all eternity*.

ἦν] The impf. probably marks the continued pre-existence of Christ up

to His manifestation, and this is likewise denoted by the phrase ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, as distinguished from ἐν ἀρχῇ.

ἀπ' ἀρχῆς] This is something more than the *beginning of the world*, because Christ's pre-existence is prior to this, inasmuch as the world was made by Him. Nor can it strictly mean *the beginning of all things*, because, strictly speaking, eternity excludes such a notion; but it is one of the phrases whereby human thought expresses that which it cannot fully realise: eternity considered in the past (like ἀπ' αἰώνων Meyer), just as εἰς τέλος τῶν αἰώνων, is an equally inadequate expression of eternity considered in the future. So ἐν ἀρχῇ, Gen. i. 1, stands for what was before the Creation.

ὃ ἀκηκόαμεν, ὃ ἐωράκαμεν] is the manifested Christ, as presented to the senses of hearing and sight. These two expressions refer to Christ Himself, ὃ ἐθεασάμεθα, ὃ ἐψηλάφησαν αἱ χεῖρες ἡμῶν, to the facts of His manifestation, such as His Crucifixion (ὃ ἐθεασ.), which we witnessed with our eyes, and His Resurrection in the body, which was witnessed by the touch of our hands (John xx. 27). ὃ] The neuter refers in gender to the pre-existent Christ, who was really manifested in His human without losing His divine nature. In ὃ ἐθεασάμεθα the neuter is the θέαμα.

περὶ τοῦ λόγου τῆς ζωῆς] These words show that ὃ ἐθεασ. κ.τ.λ. do not refer to Christ, but to something concerning Christ; so that the apostle divides his Gospel message into three: 1. The eternally pre-existent Christ. 2. The manifested Christ. 3. The acts and facts of the manifestation of Him who, though manifested, was

ζωὴ ἐφανερώθη, καὶ ἐωράκαμεν, καὶ μαρτυροῦμεν,
καὶ ἀπαγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον; ἥτις

still to be thought of as pre-existent. It is evident that these words denote the same person as the object of ἀκηκόαμεν, ἐωράκαμεν.

τοῦ λόγου τῆς ζωῆς] By some interpreted the Living Word, or the Life-giving Word (Calvin, Meyer); cf. Phil. ii. 16: but the use of λόγος in St. John rather points to a deeper meaning, *the Word of the Father, or Christ*; λόγος being the proper term to express the pre-existent Christ, as Χριστός is the proper term to express the manifested λόγος.

τῆς ζωῆς] Characterising or identifying genitive (Gr. 542. viii. b.), the characteristic identified with the essence of that which is spoken of. St. John i. 4: ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν. Verse 2: ἡ ζωὴ ἐφανερώθη, ζωὴ ἥτις ἦν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα. It seems as if St. John had specially in his memory the commencement of his Gospel, or rather the notions there expressed were always present to his mind, and therefore suggested themselves as the natural expression for our Lord; so that λόγος and ζωὴ both denote certain qualities, so to say, whereby we may partially recognise the notion of the pre-existent Son.

περὶ] with genitive, *about* (Gr. 632. I. 2. b.).

2. καὶ ἡ ζωὴ] The foregoing sentence is broken off by this parenthesis, which is introduced as an emphatic assertion of the truth of this message. καὶ is emphatic, introducing its sentence as especially connected with the foregoing clause, explanatory and confirmatory of it. *Verily*. ζωὴ is used to express Christ, because it is the prominent element in the compound expression—ὁ λόγος τῆς ζωῆς . . . ἡ ζωὴ, *this life*. ἐφανερώθη, the

apost, expresses the fact of the manifestation without the accident of time. καὶ ἐωράκαμεν κ.τ.λ.] ἐωράκαμεν refers rather to the evidence on which their convictions were founded; μαρτυροῦμεν to the depth and certainty of the convictions themselves, or more probably to the peculiar apostolic function as μάρτυρες; ἀπαγγέλλομεν to their declaration of these convictions, to their function as evangelists and preachers. καὶ is used with each, to bring each emphatically forward as distinct acts. The tense of the two last verbs marks these functions as being discharged at the present time, while the preceding perfect introduces their present convictions in their relation to the past ocular evidence of them.

τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον] As our Lord was, in the preceding verse, denoted by the compound notions of λόγος and ζωὴ, so is He here spoken of under one of them, ζωὴ. The fitness of this term as applied to Christ is manifold, and will strike different persons differently.

(1) Christ is *Life* as being the fountain of life, from the breath of whose omnipotent will natural life passed into every thing that lives (ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, John i. 3). (2) As being the source of spiritual life, whereby the living soul lives, with new powers, new aims, &c. (ἐγὼ εἶμι ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια, John xiv. 6). (3) As being the Author to us of everlasting life, whereby the body and soul survive the temporary separation which we call death. (4) As being Himself life in the highest sense of the notion. αἰώνιον] This term may be applied to Christ in any one of the above senses; for though the life in its out-

3 ἦν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, καὶ ἐφανερώθη ἡμῖν· ὃ ἐώρακαμεν καὶ ἀκηκόαμεν, ἀπαγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς κοινωνίαν ἔχητε μεθ' ἡμῶν· καὶ ἡ κοινωνία δὲ ἡ ἡμετέρα μετὰ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ

ward manifestation in things natural will pass away, yet the Divine life which was the breath of the natural life will exist for ever. But relatively to us it is most expressive in either of its two last senses; as our natural life and our spiritual life, emanations though they be from the eternal life in Christ, yet will be merged in that everlasting life in which the spiritual will coincide with the natural, and the glorified body then glorified will no longer be at war with the spirit then sanctified.

τήν] The repetition of the article brings forward separately and distinctly the two notions of *life* and *eternity*.

ἦτις] emphasises the *ζωὴ αἰώνιος*, and marks that it denotes Christ: *that* eternal life which was pre-existent as God, and yet dwelt among men as man (Gr. 816. 6).

ἦν] Continuous past existence. ἐφανερώθη, because, compared with the existence of Christ, this manifestation was but momentary.

πρὸς (Gr. 905. ε.).

ἡμῖν] Meyer observes that this is an addition to the former notion in the beginning of the verse, and prevents its being a mere repetition; but it seems as if St. John purposely repeated himself, in order to insist on the notion of the real manifestation of the pre-existent Christ; and if any special force is to be given to ἡμῖν it may be found in its opposition to ὑμῖν, verse 3.

τόν] Possessive use of the article, *His* Father. *The* so called in re-

ference to His relation to the pre-existent manifested Christ.

3. 8 ἐώρακαμεν] Emphatic resumption of verse 1 after the parenthesis.

ἵνα] Object of the preaching of the Apostles; hence of course the object of the Gospel which they preached. καὶ ὑμεῖς] *Kaí* emphatic, *you too*, who have neither heard nor seen.

ἔχητε κοινωνίαν] Meyer takes this as very nearly equivalent to *κοινωνοὶ ᾗτε*. The difference between them may be that the words of the text imply both the obtaining the privilege as something which does not naturally belong to us, as well as the permanence of the possession.

κοινωνίαν] 'That ye may become partakers of the same blessings which we enjoy (μεθ' ἡμῶν) as ear or eye-witnesses of Christ on earth, be joined together in the same body, the same belief, the same knowledge, the same aims, the same hopes, the same destinies.' The object of the ministers of Christ ought to be so to live by living faith and earnest repentance that their flocks may be as they are, and this participation in Apostolic life ought to be the aim of all who know the Gospel.

καὶ—δέ] (Gr. 769. 2.) The *καὶ* is connexive, joining the *κοινωνία* with that which had just been spoken of; *δέ* lays emphasis on the identity between them, putting that which the Apostles enjoyed in juxta-position with that which St. John desired in the former verse for his readers.

ἡμετέρα] represents the genitive of possession, not of reference or object,

Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· καὶ ταῦτα γράφομεν ὑμῖν, ἵνα ἡ 4

‘the fellowship which we enjoy,’ not ‘fellowship with us.’

μετὰ τοῦ πατρὸς κ.τ.λ.] Those who are in the fellowship of which the apostle speaks (i.e. sharers of the privileges which they possess) are in one body with the Father and the Son (John xiv. 23). Is the *κοινωνία* which the believers were to have with the Apostles of the same sort as that which the Apostles and the believers were to have with the Father and the Son? I think not. *κοινωνία* has three senses: (1) The fact of one person being in communion with another so as to be in the same body with him. (2) Or of his enjoying something in common with him, as in verse 7; cf. Acts ii. 42. (3) That which is so shared; and this either that which is communicated from one person to another (Rom. xv. 26), so as to give him a share thereof, or which, being given by a third person, is shared by two or more (1 Cor. i. 9). In the first clause of verse 3 *κοινωνία* signifies either the union between the Apostles and believers, or something shared by the Apostles and those who joined them, or that union between the believers and Christ, they dwelling in Him, and He in them, which was the common property, so to say, of the Apostles, and those who joined them; while in the second clause the *κοινωνία* is not anything shared by the believers and God, but the being joined together with Him in one body in Christ; either (1) that ye may be in the same body with us who are one body with God; or (2) that ye may be partakers with the same privileges with us who are one with God. In (1) *κοινωνία* has really the same sense in both. In (2) it is participation in common privileges, and fellowship

in one body.

It may not be denied that at first sight it may be supposed that St. John makes *κοινωνία* with the Apostles, and hence with the Church in the Romanist sense of the word, the condition of the *κοινωνία* with the Father (so Estius); but the passage in St. John's Gospel xiv. 23, where the promise of *κοινωνία* with the Father and the Son is given directly and immediately to everyone who loves Him, shows that this interpretation cannot be the true one, and that the real clue to the passage is to be found in the twofold sense of *κοινωνία* given above. Besides which, those to whom St. John was writing were in visible communion with the Church, so that if this visible communion is the condition and channel of communion with God, there would have been no need of the Epistle.

μετὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς κ.τ.λ.] In this fellowship we are mystically in the Father and Son, and They in us. τοῦ Υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ] The Son of God. The distinguishing characteristic of Christ as the Messiah; one of the peculiar points which was a test of true faith in the Apostles' days; so in ch. iv. 2 the reality of the mission of Christ is similarly introduced. The peculiar heresies of the day denied the reality of Christ's personal existence, or made Him out to be a spirit of some sort or other, and not the Son of God; hence St. John chooses to bring forward prominently this characteristic of His Divine Sonship.

τοῦ Υἱοῦ] The repetition of the article might grammatically mark the distinct personality of the Son from the Father, and it is not unlikely that St. John intended to mark this.

4. καὶ] refers to ἀπαγγέλλομεν in v. 3.

5 χαρὰ ὑμῶν ἣ πεπληρωμένη. Καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἣν ἀκηκόαμεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀναγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν, ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς φῶς ἐστι, καὶ σκοτία ἐν αὐτῷ

ταῦτα] The whole Epistle.

γράφομεν] The plural marks that St. John felt himself to be speaking the sentiments and doctrines of all the Apostles.

ἢ χαρὰ ὑμῶν ἢ πεπληρωμένη] Cf. John xv. 11; xvii. 13, in which Christ Himself declares this to be the object of His preaching.

ἡ χαρὰ ὑμῶν would be the feeling of joyful gratitude which the true Christian receives from the true Gospel, embodying as it does the highest love of God for the world in the doctrine of our Saviour's birth, mission, death, and the highest perfection of social and moral man in the law of love. The Gnostic heresy, as far as it takes from the doctrine of the Atonement of Christ, takes something from God's love, and so prevents the joy of the believer attaining its proper perfection. The doctrine of Antinomianism, as far as it confounds virtue and vice, takes from the perfection of mankind. If the personal office of God in the salvation of the world (the love of God in the death of His Son, the love of the Son, the presence of the Comforter) is taken from the Gospel scheme, the feeling of belief is at the best rather one of acquiescence than of joy. Antinomianism produces rather a reckless sense of license than joy. If the reading be ἡμῶν, it is the joy of the Apostles, and especially of St. John, in contemplating prospectively the perfect faith of those to whom he was writing.

ἣ πεπληρωμένη] The periphrasis by the perfect marks rather the state resulting from the verbal notion than

the simple action itself,

5. καὶ αὕτη κ.τ.λ.] St. John now tells them what this message was which was to bring the body of the Church into communion with God.

αὕτη] refers to the whole of the following sentence (Gr. 657. 2. b.), and is in the feminine gender by attraction to ἐπαγγελία (Gr. 657. 2. b. fin.) ἐπαγγελία] (Lach. Tisch. Meyer ἀγγελία, which is not found elsewhere except ch. iii. 11, but often in LXX) is properly a promise; here it is *the promised message*, or *the message fulfilling the promise*. De Wette (following Œcum. Corn. a Lap. Beza, &c.) takes it simply as *message*, but it is not used elsewhere in N. T. in this sense, and undoubtedly one of the characteristics of the Gospel message was that it was the Promise fulfilled. Cf. Acts xiii. 23.

ἀπ' αὐτοῦ] Jesus Christ. ἀπὸ is thus used in classic Greek (Gr. 620. 3. f.). ἀναγγέλλομεν] 'What we have received from Christ we in our turn preach to you.' Meyer thinks that the use of the compound proves that ἀγγελία is the reading above, not ἐπαγγελία; but the two words may be used of the same thing in different relations. ἐπαγγελία; 'the promised message'; ἀναγγέλλειν, 'the message in which Christ's words are repeated.' Erasmus (Meyer): 'Quod filius annuntiavit hoc Apostolus acceptum a filio renunciat.' And this characteristic of their preaching makes it all the more valuable to us. It was not their own invention or the product of their own wit, or wisdom, or moral sense.

ὁ Θεός] 'The God of the Gospel'

οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεμία. ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι κοινωνίαν ἔχο- 6

(Gr. 447. obs. 4).

φῶς] without the article, not merely a *light* (Luther), but light itself in its abstract perfection (Gr. 448. 1). In St. John's Gospel i. 4 τὸ φῶς is used of the Messiah to signify the particular light which God shed on the world in and by Him.

There are several senses in which the word *light* may be applied metaphorically to the Deity: (1) with regard to its essence or nature; (2) with regard to its properties; (3) with regard to its results. In the second sense we might say that God is light as being the Source of all light; and in the third as enlightening the mind; but St. John applies light to God in its essence as infinitely and unmixedly pure and spotless, as we learn from the context speaking of the contrary as *darkness*, and of freedom from sin as the grace corresponding on earth to the attribute of light in God.

The message is not confined to the announcement that God is light, but goes down to the end of the chapter.

καὶ σκοτία] This is not merely the same notion repeated in a negative form; but it enhances the former by saying that this light is subject to no darkness or change, is never obscured, and never passes away, as the natural light passes into darkness and is lost. God is essentially and infinitely pure and holy without any admixture of imperfection, or sin, or ignorance; and that which St. John in this Epistle regards and puts forward as the main point in the Gospel message is the infinite purity and holiness of God, comprising every grace that can be conceived in an inconceivable degree. Hence arises His judgment against sin, His love for the sinner,

His will for man's justification by Christ and sanctification by the Spirit; in short, all the Divine economy of man's fall and restoration. The infinite purity of God is that which in theory gives us the clue to the Divine counsels, and in practice keeps before us the necessity for striving after holiness in our own souls. His infinite holiness at once convinces us of His rejection of the wilfully unholy, and of the necessity for our being clothed upon by a higher holiness than our own, and of His acceptance of those who, being clothed upon by Christ, become in some sort partakers of the Divine holiness.

οὐδεμία] at the end of the clause emphasises the negation.

6. From this fundamental principle of the Gospel St. John goes on to show the necessity for purity of belief and life, in opposition, doubtless, to those false professors or teachers who would turn the doctrine of all being concluded under sin, and of the free gift of mercy, into a cloak of maliciousness.

ἐὰν εἴπωμεν] If we take ἐὰν with the conjunctive in its strict grammatical force, it marks the action as likely to occur (Gr. 854. 1), as one of frequent occurrence, without adverting to any particular case or cases in which it had occurred.

ὅτι κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν] The assertion which a person may make, or even the persuasion which he may entertain (for εἴπωμεν is not merely to say to others, but to say to oneself —persuadere sibi et aliis. Bengel), that he is in spiritual communion with God is not what is required, but the more real test of holiness. We here get the sure basis of assurance.

The form of the whole sentence

μεν μετ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐν τῷ σκότει περιπατῶμεν, ψευ-
7 δόμεθα, καὶ οὐ ποιοῦμεν τὴν ἀλήθειαν· ἐὰν δὲ ἐν
τῷ φωτὶ περιπατῶμεν, ὡς αὐτός ἐστιν ἐν τῷ φωτὶ,

shows us that *κοινωνία* with God, though it cannot exist without holiness, is not contained nor is identical with it, for it was possible, *ex hypothesi*, for a man to fancy he had this *κοινωνία* though he was without holiness; but it is that union with Christ by faith which brings us, by virtue of the union in His person of the human and divine natures, into fellowship with God. This a person might fancy himself to possess by a formal profession of belief in Him, a formal reception of His word and ordinances, in short, by a dead instead of a living faith. This would have been *primā facie* clear if St. John had said, *if we say we have faith, and walk in darkness, we lie*; but instead of *faith* he uses that which is the crowning end and privilege of faith—viz. communion with God; and hence we are led to lose sight of our own holiness as a perfection of our own, and to regard our truest and only perfection as consisting in union with God; we are led to thoughts which must drive the soul, conscious of its own weakness, to Christ as the link between God and it, the ladder whereby alone we may reach God.

καὶ ἐν κ.τ.λ.] καὶ with the finite verb here represents the participle, 'while he is walking in darkness' (Gr. 698. obs. 5). ἐν τῷ σκότει περιπατῶμεν is not mere ignorance where we are going (Luther), but *σκότος* represents the moral state in which the eye of the soul is darkened by self-love with all its evils, so that the sinful lusts and tempers and desires rule and guide the soul (if the light that is in thee be darkness, how great

is that darkness. Matt. vi. 23); while *περιπατεῖν* expresses the life in harmony with this moral state. Bengel, *actione interna et externa*. τῷ σκότει, the darkness, which is distinguished from all other by its being far more total and thick, so that it might appropriate the name to itself. ψευδόμεθα κ.τ.λ.] We deceive ourselves, are mistaken. Meyer refers ψευδόμεθα to εἰπόμεν, and οὐ ποιοῦμεν τὴν ἀλήθειαν to ἐν τῷ σκότει περιπατεῖν. οὐ ποιοῦμεν τὴν ἀλήθειαν is not merely a negative repetition of ψευδόμεθα, for it does not merely = μὴ ἀληθεύειν (*veritas non facto ipso nostro apud nos locum habet*. Bengel), but is the same as John iii. 21; where it is opposed to φαῦλα πράσσειν, practising the true will of God, the true duty of man — τὴν ἀλήθειαν, the truth as revealed by God to the world, in all its perfection and fulness; but it may contain also an allusion to the want of harmony between the words and deeds of the merely professing Christian. De Wette's notion, 'to act in accordance with the essence of Christian fellowship,' is too far-fetched for the passage, though of course this might be termed ἡ ἀλήθεια.

7. ἐὰν δὲ κ.τ.λ. ἐν τῷ φωτὶ περιπατῶμεν] Practice compared with the mere profession of ἐὰν εἰπόμεν, above.

ἐν τῷ φωτὶ] signifies the moral state in which spiritual light is the atmosphere in which the soul moves and lives, in which God's Holy Spirit puts into our hearts holy desires and good counsels, so that our whole nature is full of light, and we see what is holy and good, and how to do

κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' ἀλλήλων, καὶ τὸ αἷμα Ἰησοῦ

it; while *περιπατεῖν* here also refers to the practical life corresponding to such an inward state. That the phrase of *walking in the light* does not exclude sin of some sort may be seen from the end of the verse. It refers rather to the *will* to be holy, which is often not carried into actual existence owing to the weakness of human nature. τῷ φωτί, the light *par excellence*.

ὡς αὐτός κ.τ.λ.] defines the kind of light in which the true Christian walks, not the false lights of philosophy or of paganism, but that sort of spiritual elevation and enlightenment whereby we are conformed to God. It is not a mere resemblance but actual similarity, of course in kind, not in degree, like 'be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,' the likeness arising from the Christian being Θεὸς κοινωνὸς φύσεως (2 Peter i. 4). ἔστι in His eternal essence and being. This is the phrase appropriate to God in heaven, as *περιπατεῖν* is to man on earth. We must assimilate our notions of holiness and our practical life to that infinite purity and holiness which are implied in the notion of God, and revealed by Christ in the God of the Gospel, above — ὁ Θεὸς φῶς ἔστι.

κοινωνίαν κ.τ.λ.] There are two ways of explaining this: either (1) we have fellowship with one another, Christians among ourselves (Beda, Cyran. Grot. Wolf, Bengel, Semler, Lücke, Baumg. Crusius, De Wette): or (2) we and God have fellowship with one another (Aug. Beza, Socin.). Another reading is αὐτοῦ for ἀλλήλων, which of course is identical in sense with 2, and would exclude 1 altogether. Meyer urges in favour of 1 that 2 would in-

volve tautology, inasmuch as walking in light, and communion with God, are identical, and that the fellowship of Christians among themselves, which is the leading notion of the passage, is not mentioned; but (α) the walking in light, and fellowship with God, are not tautological, inasmuch as the former here spoken of is the test of the latter: we not only say we have fellowship with God, as may be done by those who walk in darkness, but we really and actually have it. (β) The fellowship of Christians among themselves is not the leading notion of the passage in v. 3, but the participation of common privileges, the principal of which is fellowship with God, and the privilege which is participated must be considered a higher and more important notion in the passage than the participation in it. Moreover, though communion with God, and holiness of heart and life, are expressions for one and the same state, yet they represent it to us in different relations; one is absolute, the other relative. Moreover, holiness of heart and life, as it is a condition of the beginning of this fellowship (if a man love Me, he will keep my words, and . . . we will love him and make our abode with him. John xiv. 23), so it is the law and means of the increase of it, drawing the holy bond tighter and closer as we get more and more of the Divine nature. 2 refers more directly to the opposed passage, ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν κ.τ.λ., where walking in darkness is brought forward as a proof of lack of fellowship with God, as here walking in light as the test of such fellowship. It seems as if the *κοινωνία* in both the opposed passages must be the same—viz. fellowship

Χριστοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ καθαρίζει ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης
8 ἁμαρτίας. Ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔχομεν,

with God; and it will seem strange if St. John, in giving the result of our walking in light, were to give the lower fellowship, that of Christians among themselves, and not the higher fellowship, that of Christians with God. This is the first privilege whereof a pure spiritual state within, and a holy life corresponding to it without, gives us assurance that we are, and may be sure that we are, in fellowship with God.

καὶ τὸ αἷμα κ.τ.λ.] The second privilege of which a life of holiness assures us is that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin—observe, not faith in His blood, but His blood itself. Nothing can be a more clear or satisfactory statement of the doctrine of the sacrificial atonement by Christ than these few words. It is not Χριστός or θάνατος Χριστοῦ, but αἷμα Χριστοῦ, referring to the sacrificial character of the means whereby Christ works out our purification.

τοῦ Υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ] To mark the identity of the Redeemer and the Son of God, between the Son of Man and the Son of God, and the Divine Sonship of Christ, whereby He was able to redeem us; not merely the relation between God and Christ, as Father and Son, nor yet the harmony between the will of the Father and the love of the Son.

καθαρίζει] The present marks the perpetual operation of the blood of Christ (*indefinite present*, Gr. 395. 1). The cleansing here ascribed to the blood of Christ, as operating on those *who walk in the light*, shows that this walking in light, i.e. the nearest approach to divine holiness attainable by man, does not exclude the existence

of sins of weakness, the stain whereof is wiped out by the justifying blood of Christ. The condition of this purification by Christ's blood is that holiness of heart which is expressed *by light*. The idea of *cleansing* is different from that of *redeeming*, which would denote releasing us from the punishment of sin; and from that of *freeing*, which would denote releasing us from the dominion of sin. This καθαρισμός carries holiness still higher, and brings us into nearer communion with God, by washing out the stains of sin.

ἡμᾶς, sc.] We who are walking in the light.

ἀπὸ πάσης ἁμαρτίας] πάσης does not mean from every sin of whatever character it may be, for certain sins are incompatible with the internal principle of light, which is a condition of the purifying by Christ's blood, but it marks the total purification effected by that blood, extending to those sins in which a holy will is thwarted by human weakness.

In reference, however, to a past life of sin, it is true that no sin is excluded from the purifying blessing of Christ. But the apostle is not here speaking of past, but of present life. It is the privilege of those who are pure in heart that the sins of weakness which they commit are cleansed by Christ's blood.

8. Ἐὰν εἴπωμεν κ.τ.λ.] We say so to ourselves. If we believe or imagine that we have not, as men, sin, however perfect may be our human life, the state in which we are is first one of *self-deceit*, second of ignorance of the truth; i.e. we know neither the realities of human life, nor can we

ἐαυτοὺς πλανῶμεν, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἡμῖν.
ἐὰν ὁμολογῶμεν τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν, πιστός ἐστι καὶ 9

understand or apprehend the Gospel, which is the truth. For the first condition of the apprehension and possession of the Gospel is the sense of our need of Christ as a Saviour from, and atonement of, our sin. Christ is not a mere moral teacher, nor yet a mere Redeemer, but a Saviour from sin.

ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔχομεν] ἁμαρτίαν ἔχειν is not identical with ἡμαρτηκέναι, but points to the inward principle of sin, which comes to us as part of our inheritance from Adam, while ἡμαρτηκέναι expresses rather the state of sin, the unruly lusts and tempers proceeding from that inward principle, or the acts of sin which are the outward exhibition of these.

ἐαυτούς] for ἡμᾶς αὐτούς, as frequently in N. T. and in classical Greek (Gr. 654. 2. b.).

πλανῶμεν] The use of the active voice with the personal pronoun marks that such persons are not only deceived, but are themselves the agents in the deceit. The middle verb might have been used to express this notion, but it would have been less emphatic than the words as they stand (Gr. 363. 4).

9. ἐὰν ὁμολογῶμεν] There are two reasons why confessing ourselves to be sinners is necessary for the enjoyment of the benefits of the Gospel: 1. In the decree of God, it being His good pleasure that acknowledgment of the fault should be the condition and antecedent of forgiveness thereof. 2. In the nature of the thing, inasmuch as it is impossible for anyone to receive Christ's salvation who does not desire it, and no one can desire it who does not feel

the sin and the danger to which the sin exposes him; and the exposition, so to speak, of this feeling, i.e. confession before God, would be the natural mode of seeking forgiveness; so that he who does not confess his sin does not seek forgiveness.

τὰς ἁμαρτίας, not τὴν ἁμαρτίαν] Our acts of sin, our actual sins, not merely our sinfulness.

ἡμῶν for ἡμῶν αὐτῶν (Gr. 652. obs. 5). πιστός ἐστι καὶ δίκαιος] This does of course not mean that these attributes of God depend on our confession of our sins, though Meyer has thought it necessary to say so, but they express the certainty which we may derive from the promises of God, combined with a knowledge of His unfailing attributes, that our sins will, if we confess them, be forgiven. That on which our confidence rests is twofold, inasmuch as He is certain to perform that which He has promised: first, from His attribute of unchangeable faithfulness as due to His own Being; next, from the attribute of His justice as due to the creatures to whom He made the promise. St. John here evidently argues from the attributes of God the certainty of His acting towards us in a particular way; the same principle of argument is involved in such passages as 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' Genesis xviii. 25; 'How shall God judge the world?' Rom. iii. 6. This principle, however, is often urged by the modern sceptics against the truth of certain plain statements of Scripture, which they would explain away either by new or forced theories of interpretation or by mysticism, or allegory, or

δικαίος, ἵνα ἀφ᾽ ἡμῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας, καὶ καθάρισις
 10 ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀδικίας. ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι οὐχ

metaphor, because the facts so stated are contrary to certain attributes which the moral reason arguing from human views of right and wrong assigns to God. It is important then to define the limits within which this principle holds good. As far as our positive knowledge of God, either from reason or revelation, enables us to assert a resemblance in kind between our finite and His infinite perfections, we may, in the absence of any surer information, argue that His actions will be in harmony with our notions of morality; but where any definite act or purpose is revealed as of God, then our knowledge of His attributes is not so complete or clear as to enable us to assert that it cannot be of God, because it is contrary to what we should think right as between man and man. We may be certain that the action or purpose is just or merciful, in harmony with a justice or a mercy higher and more comprehensive than our own. Thus it is contrary to our notions of justice to give the same to the good and the evil; to reward good desert and evil desert exactly alike; to give no more to him who bore the labour and heat of the day than to him who wrought but one hour; and yet all these are in harmony with God's perfections.

ἵνα ἀφ᾽ ἡ] The usual N. Test. use of the final conjunctive for the infinitive of classical Greek (Gr. 803. 3); and for aorist conjunctive see *ibid*.

The promise of God which He is as it were pledged to perform is twofold—forgiveness of sins and sanctification. And as the Gospel is of course coincident with this promise, these two make up the immediate benefits of

Christ's Passion to the true believer. This is important, inasmuch as some persons confine the benefit of the Passion to forgiveness of sins, and hold that when this is vouchsafed the whole of God's promise has been realised. Nor is it merely cleansing from the stain of actual sin (this might have been the case if ἁμαρτία had been used), but rather from the corruption of indwelling sin: this is made more clear by observing the use of the word ἀδικία instead of ἁμαρτία. ἀδικία is not outward sin considered in its effect on our souls, but inward sin, embodying the principle of self-love, which mostly shows itself in injuring or despising others. ἀδικία and ἁμαρτία are not coincident (Meyer). All ἀδικία is ἁμαρτία (see ch. v. 17), but all ἁμαρτία is not ἀδικία—blasphemy, for instance. ἀδικία rather implies the neglect of that brotherly love of which St. John speaks so strongly as being the perfection of Christian life. This purification from original sin, begun in this life, will not be completed till the next, as may be seen by the next verse.

10. ἐὰν εἴπωμεν κ.τ.λ.] Though the believer who walks in light, i.e. under the guidance of the indwelling Spirit, will be purified from the corruption of sin, yet no one can as long as he lives say that he is not in a state of sin, and in the commission of actual sin. The apostle uses the plural to show that he is speaking of Christians as a body, and includes himself. For the difference between ἁμαρτίαν ἔχειν and ἡμαρτηκέναι see *supra*. The perfect marks the present state, and present acts, arising from and connected with the past.

ἡμαρτήκαμεν, ψεύστην ποιούμεν αὐτόν, καὶ ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἡμῖν.

ΤΕΚΝΙΑ μου, ταῦτα γράφω ὑμῖν, ἵνα μὴ ἀμάρ- Π.

ψεύστην ποιούμεν αὐτόν] ποιούμεν, *we make Him out to be*. This notion, expressed as it is, implies the declaration of God that all men sin; which declaration is of course implied in the promise to forgive the sins of Christians on condition that everyone confesses himself to be a sinner, even though he is a Christian καὶ] expresses a further result implied in denial of sin.

ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ] The Revelation of God, the Gospel, is not really received by us, does not abide in us, as the power of truth (see verse 8) leading us into all truth.

αὐτοῦ] Proceeding from Him. Gen. cause (542. 5. δ.).

In this short chapter we have set before us: the pre-existence of Christ; His manifestation on earth; the credibility of the Apostles in what they related; the nature of the bond of Christian unity—viz. community of faith and holiness of life; the communion of the Christian with God the Father and God the Son; the essential and perfect holiness of God; the absolute necessity of holiness of heart and life; the twofold benefits of Christ's Passion to such as believe and comply with this condition—viz. forgiveness and sanctification; the fact that, in spite of our endeavours to walk in light, all sin; that a sense and confession of our sinfulness is a condition of these benefits; the certainty of our partaking of them, if we confess our sinfulness, both original and actual; the fact that God has revealed the sinfulness of all men.

1. *τεκνία μου*] This appellation of affectionate admonition is used by

Christ Himself to His disciples (Mark x. 24, *τέκνα*; John xiii. 33), and by St. Paul (Gal. iv. 19). St. John may use it here simply as a term of affection, or as their spiritual father or teacher.

ταῦτα γράφω ὑμῖν κ.τ.λ.] Either (1) to what follows (Bengel); or (2) the whole Epistle (Grotius); or (3) to what has just been said. The fact of sin being a necessary attendant on even a Christian's life, and that sin is atoned for by the blood of Christ. This is not to be a motive or excuse for sinning. The whole Gospel scheme, the sinfulness and sin of man, the death of Christ for sin, should impress us with deep horror of sin, and rouse us to earnestness in accepting the privileges of Christ's death. The practical secret of Gospel life is not the being contented to sin, but the walking in light. Again, *ταῦτα γράφω ὑμῖν κ.τ.λ.* because there is no surer snare of sin than that spiritual pride which fancies that it has no sin.

καὶ ἐάν κ.τ.λ.] καὶ is merely connective, introducing a new thought which flows naturally from the context, 'sin is forbidden to the Christian, and yet, when he does sin, there is a means of escape provided.' The certainty of sinning and the remedy for it expressed in the sharp juxtaposition in which it occurs in life. There are three characters in relation to which we may view the doctrine here laid down: (1) He who falls into lesser sins through frailty, in spite of watching, contrary to his active will. (2) He who falls into grosser sins from want of watching, contrary

τητε· καὶ ἔάν τις ἀμάρτη, παράκλητον ἔχομεν πρὸς
2 τὸν πατέρα, Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν δίκαιον· καὶ αὐτὸς

to his passive will. (3) The man who sins habitually with consent of his will. Of these Christ is the Advocate: (1) On the active energies of his will in repentance. (2) On his awakening into repentance. (3) On his will being converted.

ἔάν] It is perfectly true that ἔάν may grammatically denote the almost certainty of a man's sinning, but ἔάν so completely supplies the place of the optative in the N. T. that no argument can fairly be grounded upon it. It is a true doctrine, but the form of the sentence does not necessarily express it. It may fairly suggest it to the reader as a reflexion; but it cannot be said to support the doctrine.

παράκλητον ἔχομεν] ἔχομεν marks that the apostle includes himself under the indefinite clause ἔάν τις ἀμάρτη.

Παράκλητον] This word is used for Comforter of the Holy Spirit (John xiv. 16: ἄλλον παράκλητον δώσει ὑμῖν), where by implication it is also applied to Christ Himself, and so the cognate terms παράκλησις, παρακαλῶν are applied to the Father (2 Cor. i. 3, 4: Θεὸς πάσης παρακλήσεως ὁ παρακαλῶν ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει). Here, however, it is evidently used in its juridical sense of advocate, he who sets forth and pleads another's cause. So Dem. 341. 10: τῶν παρακλητῶν δεήσεις. Gregory Naz. (Orat. 4. de Theol.) takes it as *adviser, counsellor*, but the words πρὸς τὸν πατέρα show that the office of Christ has reference not only to us but also to the Father, between whom and us He stands as pleading for us, and that He is the Propitiation for our sins. This is confirmed by other

passages of Scripture (Rom. viii. 34; Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24); and hence there is no reason why we should not adopt the *primâ facie* meaning of the word, and the bearing of the context. Our Saviour is our Advocate: (1) As pleading before the Father that our sins have been atoned for by His Propitiation. (2) As presenting our prayers for pardon. (3) Interceding with the Father for us. It is not necessary, with some commentators, to conceive of Christ as if He were at His Father's feet and moving Him to mercy by His supplications and prayers; nor yet (with Baumgarten, Crusius) to think of His Intercession as something not now done by Him in heaven, but simply as the result of His Atonement, whereby the Father is moved to mercy towards us; but it is the continuation and completion in heaven of this work of salvation on earth by the personal intercession of the glorified Sacrifice carried on by the sinless man Jesus standing before God as the Advocate for sinning man.

It is worth while to observe how the Romanist commentator Estius, acute as he generally is, can find no better answer to the objection which this passage furnishes against the Papal doctrine of the Mediation of Saints than a simple assertion that such is the case, unsupported by either text or argument. That a commentator such as he is should have nothing in the way of proof or answer is no small evidence that there is none such to be found in Scripture.

πρός] as above, ch. i. 2 (and 638. iii. 1. d.)

τὸν πατέρα] His father, or The

ἰλασμός ἐστι περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν· οὐ περὶ τῶν

Father *par excellence*, the first Person in the Trinity, the Father of our Advocate; but Πατήρ when used by itself for God always has the article.

δικαίον] Not merely *kind, gentle* (Grotius), not yet *faithful and true* (Socinus), nor yet acting justly and rightly as an advocate, not pleading the cause of those who do not deserve it, for it is the cause of undeserving sinners He pleads. Nor yet = δικαίων (Wolf), but *without sin* (Corn. a Lap. Luther, Calv.), the sacrifice without spot, that being the

characteristic which admits of His intercession for us (Heb. vii. 26, 27).

2. καὶ αὐτός κ.τ.λ. καί, emphatic conj. ἐστί, not ἦν, *is* not merely *was* (Estius). Heb. vii. 24: ἀπαρδ-βατον ἔχει τὴν ἱερωσύνην.

ἰλασμός] Only used here and in ch. iv. 10; also with περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν. The abstract notion is applied to Christ as ὁδός, ζωή, &c.; and, moreover, the act being applied to the agent denotes the great truth that Christ was not only the Priest but the Sacrifice.

This is one of the words which Neologians are obliged to deprive of its proper and ancient meaning, and to reduce to the proportions of their meagre faith. Their one rule of interpretation is, whatever any such expression or passage may have been taken to mean in ancient ages of the Church, it must now receive the new light thrown upon it by the spirit of the age; so that one of the great wants of their system is a new lexicon in which such words may be set forth according to their new interpretation. It is no small argument against such a system that the old lexicons and authorities will not serve its turn, and it seems to be a more probable way of arriving at the meaning which the Holy Spirit meant such words to convey if we adopt a less shifting and more reasonable rule than this.

It may, I think, be fairly laid down—

That we must ascertain of what meanings the word is capable, from its etymology, or common use, or natural or religious idioms. If there is but one meaning, then this must be taken in spite of all endeavours to assign to it some new one; but if, as is generally the case, there are more meanings than one, some one of these must be selected, and on the following considerations:—

α. Negatively—Whether any of these meanings are excluded—

1. By etymological or grammatical grounds.
2. By context.
3. By other passages of Scripture.
4. By ancient authority.

β. Positively—We must test each of the remaining meanings, and find out which of them is suggested by and most harmonises with—

1. The context.
2. Other passages of Scripture.
3. The Primitive Church.

We must observe that in the point of religious idiom the usage of the LXX must have very great weight, though it is not absolutely decisive. And in testing a passage negatively by other passages of Scripture, it will not be

necessarily excluded by a passage which sets forth the contrary doctrine, for both may be true together, but only if it *denies* the doctrine of the opposing passage directly, and not merely by human implication. If these tests coincide in one meaning, then the possibility of there being some other meaning is not sufficient to reject or even to throw doubt on the one so supported.

In accordance with these rules, we cannot be justified in giving to *ἱλασμός* a meaning which it is etymologically and idiomatically incapable of having, nor if such meaning be unsuited to the context, nor if it assigned to Christ an attribute or office unrecognised in Scripture, nor if it introduced a notion unheard of before, merely because such meaning would support an article of the Creed; and those points must be proved separately and together by those who wish to have any sound ground for rejecting it: and, on the contrary, it is unreasonable to doubt or reject a meaning which may rightly be given to the word, which is in harmony with Scripture teaching, and with the context, and with catholic belief, especially if the only reason against it is that it recognises and upholds definite teaching which the spirit of the age chooses to dislike.

In the present case then, what is the proper meaning of *ἱλασμός* in the Greek language? It is but little used in classical Greek, though it existed in the earliest ages of the written language. Orph. Arg. 551, Lips. 1764—

αὐτίκ' ἔπειτα 'Ρέης ἔδος εἰσαναβάντες 'Ιλασμοῖς ἱεροῖς γαίης
ἀρέσασθε θύγατρα,

where it is some sort of offering to appease the wrath of Rhea. v. 533: 'Ρεῖη γὰρ κοτέσκε δεδονπότος ἔνεκα λαοῦ. What these *ἱλασμοί* were we find in v. 612: ταυροθύτους λοιβὰς ἥδ' ἱερὰ καλὰ ῥέξαν ἀριστήης. So that the word, taking all these passages together, signifies the offering of blood to appease the wrath of a divine being.

So again in Plut. Sol. xii.: *ἱλασμοῖς* τισὶ καὶ καθαρμοῖς καὶ ἰδρύσεσι κατοργιάσας καὶ καθοσιώσας τὴν πόλιν. Here, again, while *καθαρμοῖς* signifies merely purifying rites, and *ἰδρύσεσι* supplications, processions, and the like, it is certain that *ἱλασμοῖς* signifies some means of appeasing the wrath of heaven different from these, and probably a sacrifice of some animal.

In the LXX, to which we must look for the idiomatic test of the Greek of the N. T., the word occurs six times, in four of which it signifies an offering for sin, and twice the mercy and forgiveness of the person appeased, which is also given by Suidas.

Now of these two idiomatic senses the latter is excluded by the context. Anyone who reads the passage will see that it would make nonsense of it to say that Christ was a certain temper or disposition, mercy or forgiveness, shown by God towards man.

The same result follows from the cognate words *ἰλάσκεσθαι* or *ἐξιλάσκεσθαι*, which in classical Greek are to appease or propitiate, in the case of God by some religious act or offering (as early as Homer), or else simply to gain the favour of God or man; while *ἰλημι* * is used for the neuter notion of being

* In Mr. Jelf's MS. there is a pencilled mark of interrogation (?) opposite to this line. This may, perhaps, refer to such grounds of doubt as are mentioned by Liddell and Scott, Greek Lex. *sub voce* ἰλημι.

ἡμετέρων δὲ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου.

propitious or reconciled, and *ἐξιλάσκει* and *ἐξιλάσκει* have the active sense of appeasing. In the LXX the proposition *περὶ*, with *ἐξιλάσκεισθαι*, introduces the subject matter of the propitiation; the passive forms are to be cleansed or released from sin, or be appeased or rendered propitious.

The result of this is that *ἱλασμός* must be taken as the substantive of its simple and compound verbs, as an act whereby the Divine wrath is propitiated and sin wiped out. This sense is in harmony with the context, which is speaking of our Saviour as the means whereby the results and guilt of sin to man are got rid of. And it is in harmony with the teaching of the Church.

The nature of this *ἱλασμός*, whether by blood or by simple prayers, or by some other act, must be determined by Scripture, it being borne in mind that the usage of the word and its cognates in the LXX must be in reference to the Jewish mode of propitiation, which was by the sacrifice of blood; hence it would not be sufficient merely to offer the animal before the Lord, but it must be put to death.

The question is settled sufficiently to satisfy all reasonable men by such a passage as 'without shedding of blood there is no remission' (Heb. ix. 22), wherein it is distinctly stated that the notion of a propitiation for sin implies the shedding of the blood of that which is offered where it is possible; and if Christ is the propitiation, then it must be by the shedding of His blood, which we know actually took place.

From these considerations it is clear that the only sense which can be reasonably given to *ἱλασμός*, as applied to Christ, is that our Saviour did, by a proper act of propitiation, avert from us the guilt and consequences of sin by appeasing the wrath of God.

περὶ.] The preposition denotes the subject matter of the *ἱλασμός*. Thus *ἱλασμός περὶ ψυχῶν* is a propitiation for souls; *ἁμαρτιῶν* for sins.

οὗ περὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων κ.τ.λ.] *ἁμαρτιῶν* is to be supplied after *ἡμετέρων*, and before *ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου* (Gr. 893. δ.).

The doctrine of the satisfaction of Christ being for the sins of the whole world is implied in such expressions as *σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου*, ch. iv. 14, and John iv. 42. This may be explained as applying to the intention of Christ, so potentially it extended to the whole world, though actually available only to the called. Or it may be taken in a temporal sense to imply the world till the end of time (Œcumen.); but it seems clear that the sacrifice of

Christ, though peculiarly and completely available only for those who were called, does in some particulars benefit the whole world and release it from the evil in which the whole creation was travailing.

I. Mankind was, before Christ, in a state of enmity towards God. 'Even while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.' They were *ipso facto* excluded from the spiritual mercies of God, being sold under sin, and dead in trespasses and sins. By the sacrifice of Christ the penalty of Adam's sin, which affected the whole world, was paid, so that mankind was placed in a new relation to God, capable of becoming His, and enjoying His spiritual mercies. The race was emancipated by the price paid;

3 Καὶ ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἐγνώκαμεν αὐτόν, ἐὰν

Adam's sin, as it involved the whole of mankind as a race in the sins and penalties of rebellion, so the sacrifice of Christ released them therefrom. The 'jus civitatis' was restored to them as a whole, but the peculiar and personal benefits of Christ's atonement, whereby the individual soul is saved, is available to those who lay hold of it. A whole race may be enfranchised and made capable of civil or political privileges, but the full enjoyment of those privileges, the attainment of the position thus opened to them, is the result of individual will and action. Therefore Christ died for the whole world, inasmuch as He released it from certain disabilities under which it lay as a whole race.

2. He died for the whole world, as procuring for all privileges which before were confined to some: *a.* A distinct revelation of God—more distinct than is given in the book of nature. *b.* The capability of approaching Him, of being saved, which previously to the sacrifice of Christ was confined to the chosen people. *c.* The Holy Spirit, which previously was confined to a few individuals among the Jews, was now poured out on all flesh (Jelf's *Bampton Lectures*, sec. iv. page 103; Jeremy Taylor, vi. 407, Heber's edit. London, 1839). The contrast between *ἡμετέρων* and *ἔλου τοῦ κόσμου* is not that between the Jew and Gentile, but between the Christian and non-Christian, though the Christian is included in the *ἔλος κόσμος*, so as to prevent the former from spiritual pride. Augustin and Beda make *κόσμος* = 'ecclesia electorum per totum mundum dispersa,' but *κόσμος* and *ecclesia* are not identical but opposed notions in St. John.

3. He now returns to the thread which was broken off at verse 7, to explain more at length what it is to walk in the light and to have communion with Christ.

ἐν τούτῳ], sc. ἐὰν τὰς ἐντολάς κ.τ.λ. for this use of *τοῦτο* (Gr. 657. 2. *b.* obs.).

γινώσκομεν] The assurance of being Christians, assured knowledge.

ἐγνώκαμεν] may be said to be equivalent to *κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν*, but as *κοινωνία* consists in faith, and faith is a particular exercise of the intellectual power, *knowing God* expresses this *κοινωνία* in its highest and best and most essential phase; it does not exclude any notion which follows on, or is implied in, this intellectual state of faith, whether it be *love* (*Länge*) or union with Him. But these are only incomplete expressions of the state of *γνώσις τοῦ Θεοῦ* (*ἐγνώκαμεν αὐτόν*) The test and assurance of this state is not the witness of itself, but the spirituality of life, which is its necessary and unfailing result.

αὐτόν] is by some taken as referring to Christ, this being the nearest subject, but as this verse is joined in the order of thought to the 7th verse of chap. i., in which *Θεός* is the subject, it is better to refer it to *Θεός* here. The perfect *ἐγνώκα* is of course what is called a present pft.; but it is worth observing that whenever the state of those to whom or of whom he is writing as being in a state of grace is spoken of, the pft. is used, marking not merely a past state, but a past state continuing in present time. It seems as if this was the key to several passages which we shall come to in due course.

τηρῶμεν] refers as well to the inward as to the outward observance.

τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν. ὁ λέγων, ‘Ἐγνῶκα 4
αὐτόν,’ καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ μὴ τηρῶν, ψεύστης
ἐστί, καὶ ἐν τούτῳ ἡ ἀλήθεια οὐκ ἔστιν· ὃς δ’ ἂν 5
τηρῇ αὐτοῦ τὸν λόγον, ἀληθῶς ἐν τούτῳ ἡ ἀγάπη
τοῦ Θεοῦ τετελείωται. ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἐν
αὐτῷ ἐσμεν. ὁ λέγων ἐν αὐτῷ μένειν, ὀφείλει, καθὼς 6
ἐκεῖνος περιεπάτησε, καὶ αὐτὸς οὕτως περιπατεῖν.

4. ὁ λέγων] The confidence of men professing and talking faith is contrasted with the assurance of active faith. It is possible to believe in and to assert that we are truly Christ's, but the test of our assertion being true is the keeping His commandments. We may observe that this is the second time that this doctrine has been laid down in this Epistle. See I. 6.

5. ὃς δ’ ἂν τηρῇ κ.τ.λ.] The antithesis of δέ is μὴ τηρῶν.

τὸν λόγον = τὰς ἐντολὰς] The difference between them is that λόγος represents merely the declared will of God, while ἐντολή has the additional notion of man's obligation to obey. ἀληθῶς] in contrast to the false pretension to love God which does not care to keep His word.

ἐν τούτῳ] in his inner man.

ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ] Genitive of object (Gr. 542. 5. ii. c. I.); the genitive might be either *the love of God to us*, as whence it proceeds, cap. iv. 9 (Bengel, &c.), or *the love demanded by God*, as the cause; but the context shows that it is identical with *knowing Him* or *abiding in Him*, which refers to our own spiritual feelings and state. τετελείωται] does not mean *is perfect and real love*, as opposed to the false love (Beza), but *is brought to perfection*, as cap. iv. 12, 17, 18. The objection that such perfection is impossible for man is met by the fact

that it is equally impossible to *keep God's word* wholly and entirely; but in whatsoever degree the latter is possible so is the former, and if the former were attained unto so would the latter be. And, of course, perfection, like *good*, is an absolute term, which can be properly applied to *one* only; but as approaches towards good are called *good* in a relative sense, so approaches to perfection are similarly termed *perfection*.

ἐν τούτῳ] sc. keeping God's word.

ἐν] instrumental (Gr. 622. 3. a.).

ἐν αὐτῷ] marks the close union with God through Christ (al. with Christ), which is the essence of the Christian state and life. It comprises in itself *our knowing Him, the perfection of our love for Him*, and our obedience; but it is something more than any or all of these—our dwelling in God by God dwelling in us. John xiv. 23. God Himself is the person spoken of as the object of our obedience, our love, our knowledge; and therefore it is better to take ἐν αὐτῷ here as referring to our indwelling in God. Col. iii. 3.

6. ὁ λέγων] he who claims the name of Christian, and professes to be one with God.

ἐν αὐτῷ] God. μένειν is the climax. Knowledge of Him, being in Him, abiding in Him.

ἐκεῖνος] emphatic (Gr. 655. 8), *Christ*.

7 ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφω ὑμῖν, ἀλλ' ἐντολὴν παλαιάν, ἣν εἶχετε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς· ἡ ἐντολὴ ἡ 8 παλαιὰ ἐστίν ὁ λόγος ὃν ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς. πά-

περιεπάτησεν] marks that the *daily walk* in life must be like Christ's life. It is not merely a matter of feeling, but of daily practice. The mysticism of St. John sets before us not mere warmth of feeling or enthusiasm, but exalted feelings with earnest practice.

οὕτως] retrospective use of the pronoun (Gr. 658, 1).

7. ἀδελφοί] This does not necessarily mark a breaking off in the chain of thought, but simply affectionately (whether ἀγαπητοί or ἀδελφοί) calls attention to a new and important link thereof. That which follows merely continues and evolves that which precedes.

ἐντολὴν] sc. that which he has been speaking of—the walking in light as the reasonable law of man, and the command of God to him. Others (and these the greater number) take it of the *commandment of love*, but it seems as if he afterwards distinguishes this as a *καινὴ ἐντολή* (see below), and yet not *καινὴ* viewed as the perfection of the law. In Levit. xix. 18 it is a simple command.

It is remarkable how earnestly he insists on the fact that the Christian law of life is in its essence and principle nothing new. Walking in the light, obedience to God, conformity to His perfection, is still the principle. But new light is thrown on the principle—new details are brought out by the Revelation of Christ.

ἣν εἶχετε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς] ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, either from their acceptance of Christianity (most interpreters, and see vv. 24, iii. 11, 2 Epist. 5), or from the beginning of the existence of the

human race, or at least from the time when God's will presented itself to them as the law of life, from that time walking according to that will was the rule for pious life. This was the λόγος ὃν ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς. The passages quoted would seem to decide in favour of the second sense, but it may be joined with the law of love in reference to this passage. It was not *καινὴ*, inasmuch as it was involved in the old law (see below). ἀπ' ἀρχῆς need not be taken everywhere in the same sense, and the context here (verse 8) seems to mark that the period assigned to the *παλαιὰ ἐντολή* in the writer's mind was anterior to Christ's bringing the true light to the earth.

8. πάλιν] (*contrarietatem declarat et elevationem*, hic contrarietatis est declaratio. Erasm.) Again looking at it in a new and hitherto unknown light. The law of God, which men have known from the beginning, the obligation to obey God and to imitate Him, is identical with that new commandment which Christ has brought to light—viz. as specified in verse 9, the love of our neighbour. This is the fulfilling of the law of obligation and obedience.

The ἐντολή here spoken of can hardly have been in the apostle's mind exactly identical with that in v. 7; that was *παλαιά*, this is *καινὴ*.

The interpretations given of *καινὴ* (as applied to the law of love, if the law of love is supposed to be that spoken of as *παλαιά* in v. 7) are not satisfactory: 1. Calvin, never growing old. But this is true of all God's moral law. 2. New at this time:

ἢ ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφω ὑμῖν, ὃ ἐστὶν ἀληθὲς ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν· ὅτι ἡ σκοτία παράγεται, καὶ τὸ

new as newly recommended and enjoined. 3. New in the present ἐσχάτῃ ὥρᾳ, peculiar to Christianity; but this is awkward if the ἐντολή in verse 7 be referred to loving each other.

The difficulties arising from the use of παλαιά and καινὴ for the same ἐντολή, and the unsatisfactory explanation of them may lead us to suspect that the interpretation whence the difficulties arise is not the true one, and that the apostle takes into his view a longer space of time than the 100 years since Christ's birth; so that the ἐντολή which is παλαιά is the obligation to walk with God if we would know God, &c.; that which is καινὴ is a new application and development thereof, brought to light by Christ. It will be seen that the publication of this new ἐντολή is justified by the darkness having passed away and the light shining, which, of course, refers to Christ's revelation.

ὃ ἐστὶν ἀληθὲς κ.τ.λ.] Of the interpretations: 1. That it refers to the following sentence, ὅτι κ.τ.λ., 'it is true that the darkness,' &c., destroys the force of ὃ unless it be taken ungrammatically for ἡν. 2. ὃ ἐστὶν ἀληθὲς = every true Christian is in Him, and shall be united to you. 3. Dividing the words into two clauses, and supplying ἐστὶν as the verb of the second. That which is true in Him (is) true in you, but neither of these dovetail with the context. 4. Referring ὃ directly to ἐντολή, that which is thus embodied in the new command was set forth in Christ and practised by you, making ὅτι κ.τ.λ. the result and confirmation of this latter, 'hate and darkness are over-

come by love and light;' but this seems far-fetched, and scarcely suits its place in the context.

It seems clear that it must mean the truth of that which St. John was writing—St. John's statement, that it was a new command, and yet implied in and evolved from the old. Secondly, that it must be something the truth of which is confirmed and illustrated by the passing away of darkness and the coming on of light. Now this is the command to love one another, the knowledge of which is a result of the light brought by Christ, and the certainty of which is confirmed and verified by the consideration of the old state of things. The veil which concealed it from men's eyes having passed, and a new state of light having come upon earth through Christ, St. John means to say that his statement of this new law is true.

The next point is the meaning of ἐν αὐτῷ and ἐν ὑμῖν. The natural force of ἐν would be *with respect to*, *in reference to*, *in the case of*, and its repetition before ὑμῖν seems to mark that it is true in distinct and different, though similar, relations to both the parties named. It is not, and it is, true in both together, but in each separately and distinctly. It is true abstractedly as a part of God's will, in reference to God ἐν αὐτῷ as it always was, and also in reference to you as a part of your known duty, revealed to you by God, in these latter days when the former darkness has passed away and the new light shineth. Formerly it was thought allowable to hate some; the law of perfect love was then equally true

9 φῶς τὸ ἀληθινὸν ἤδη φαίνει. ὁ λέγων ἐν τῷ φωτὶ εἶναι, καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ μισῶν, ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ
 10 ἐστὶν ἕως ἄρτι. ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, ἐν τῷ

ἐν Θεῷ; it is now also true ἐν ὑμῖν ὅτι ἡ σκοτία κ.τ.λ. ἡ σκοτία. The state of darkness with regard to God's nature and will in which the heathen world was before the coming of Christ. φῶς ἀληθινόν, the real light, i.e. the revelation brought by Christ. True, in contrast to former religion and philosophy, which were or professed to be lights, but were not true and real ones. ἤδη, since Christ's coming.

9. ὁ λέγων κ.τ.λ.] This is the result of the καινὴ ἐντολή, which is a fresh development and application of the παλαιά; brotherly love is an essential point of duty, of which hatred is a negation. ἐν τῷ φωτὶ, that he is walking according to God's will, that he has embraced Christian duty. ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ, the darkness which existed before Christ's coming; or simply wickedness, as being ignorance of God, and darkness being typical of evil as light is of holiness. τὸν ἀδελφόν] Either every man (omnes in Adamo fratres sumus) = ὁ πλησίον, or ὁ ἕτερος (as in Matt. v. 22), or fellow Christian. This is most in harmony with the use of the word in this Epistle. In chap. iii. 13, etc. οἱ ἀδελφοί evidently means Christians (cf. John xxi. 23), though it is hardly fair to argue from οἱ ἀδελφοί to ὁ ἀδελφός, as in the plural the article marks a definite body, i.e. Christians; but in chap. iii. 14 τὸν ἀδελφόν is evidently used in the singular in the same sense as τοὺς ἀδελφούς in the plural. And in chap. v. 1 compared with iv. 21 ἀδελφός = ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ Θεοῦ, and St. John seems moreover to be speaking of

the relations of Christians between themselves. So ἀδελφός is also used in N. T. for *relations* (John vii. 3; Acts i. 14), and for *friends* (Matt. v. 47; John xx. 17); but neither of these suit the context.

ἕως ἄρτι (Gr. 839. 3. c. and 644), 'up to this time.' This refers to ἤδη. The light has already shone, but he is in darkness up to this time in spite of light being around him.

10. ἐν τῷ φωτὶ] seems to be used to express a man's being in a Christian state under the aspect of his being in the light of God's favour, and also as walking in His law. σκοτία of course the exact contrary. μένει] marks the abiding character of the state; is not merely a gleam of light, but lasting.

σκάνδαλον] is here as elsewhere in N. T. anything which leads a person into sin, and thus causes him to fall. The notion that σκάνδαλον must mean some occasion of falling in the outer world has produced a variety of interpretations to the words ἐν αὐτῷ. Some make ἐν otiose (Grotius); others give it the unusual sense of *for him* (De Wette, Baumg.-Crusius, Neand. etc.); Lücke says that ἐν αὐτῷ must mean *the outer world*, without making any remark of this use of ἐν being exactly the contrary of its proper and usual force. That this is incorrect is clear from the notion of the eye offending (Matt. v. 29, and xviii. 9). Movers and Huther come nearer to it: 'In his mind there is no stumbling-block' (Movers). 'The Christian is so completely possessed by the light that there is in him no undiscovered σκάνδαλον' (Huther). Others take

φωτὶ μένει, καὶ σκάνδαλον ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν. ὁ δὲ ἱ
 μισῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ ἐστί, καὶ ἐν
 τῇ σκοτίᾳ περιπατεῖ, καὶ οὐκ οἶδε ποῦ ὑπάγει,

σκάνδαλον as that which gives offence to others, leads others to sin; but this is foreign to the purpose of the writer.

It seems to me capable of an easy solution. *σκάνδαλα* are either within or around. A man is exposed to temptation from his own evil tendencies, uncontrolled, such as ambition, love of money, which have their external objects corresponding to them, and producing or heightening them. It is true jealousy or envy are produced by the happiness or prosperity of others, but these are not the corresponding objects of these feelings in the sense in which money is the object of covetousness, or pleasure of lust. These passions are not merely called forth by their immediate causes, but must have been in active existence previously, merely resting on the external object which chanced to be suited to them. There can hardly be said to be any external temptations to jealousy as there are to covetousness or lust. In the man who loves his brother these internal *σκάνδαλα* do not exist. In the case of lust, covetousness, &c., the external temptation does exist, and is continually soliciting the inner man to be moved to desire and action; but the internal *σκάνδαλον* or tendency is so subdued by the spirit of love, which works no ill to his neighbour, and therefore is the fulfilling of the law, that it does not accept the temptation, and therefore he is not led to sin as he would have been had there been ἐν αὐτῷ the *σκάνδαλον* of covetousness or lust in active operation; so also there is no *σκάνδαλον* arising from

inward reckless desires for gratification, for the love of our brother makes us sensible that these desires cannot be gratified without injury to our neighbour, and thus prevents our indulging or harbouring them. External temptations still exist for the most perfect Christian, but the internal *σκάνδαλον*, or temptation, proceeding from the tendencies to evil which not only move when solicited by outward objects, but actually unsolicited make objects and opportunities for themselves, is destroyed by love, in exact proportion as that love takes possession of a man. He is not betrayed by his own heart.

σκάνδαλα are: (1) *Outward*. (2) *Inward*.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| a. Desires excited by outward objects | } careless
of others' good. |
| β. Desires creating objects for themselves | |
| γ. Feelings excited by contraries of that to which they tend: jealousy | } desirous
of their evil. |
| δ. Feelings excited by others' actions: hatred | |

All these feelings and desires are kept within bounds (beyond which they become *σκάνδαλα* and lead into sin) by the love of our neighbour. Hence love is the perfecting of the law, for it worketh no ill to his neighbour, and all sin does. Self love is the *σκάνδαλον ἐν αὐτῷ*.

II. ἐστί, καὶ . . . περιπατεῖ] The former denotes the state of the man, the latter his practice; he is wicked in his mind and in his actions. The hatred of one's brother is the worst shape of self-love.

ὅτι ἡ σκοτία ἐτύφλωσε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ.

οὐκ οἶδε ποῦ ὑπάγει] does not know whither his life is leading him. He either must be careless of his future, or have wrong notions of the way of providing for it, or it may simply mean has no real aim in his life.

ὅτι ἡ σκοτία] One of the effects of sin is to blind a man to the real

nature of his life; it makes him content to be as he is, and to live as he lives, because the eye of the soul, the conscience, is so destroyed that it no longer acts. He can no longer distinguish right from wrong; hence the great difficulty of awakening and instructing sinners, and the great danger of sinning.

12. The Apostle, having laid down the fundamental principle of Christian life, now turns to an exhortation thereto, as the great end of his writing to them. The difficulties in this and the two following verses are obvious enough. They may be best evolved by considering—

α. The general object.

β. The connection with the context before and after.

γ. The meaning of particular expressions.

(α) The general object seems to be to call the attention of his readers emphatically to what he is writing to them.

(β) He has been setting forth the nature and principles of the Christian life, and he is about to set before them certain principles and precepts of Christian action; and this on the ground that they are Christians, called of Christ, and placed within the Gospel pale. So far all commentators are agreed.

(γ) The difficulty lies in the particular expressions. The questions are: What persons are meant by the four terms by which he addresses his readers? Whether the attributive clause introduced by ὅτι is causal or merely objective, i.e. whether the apostle is giving a reason for his writing or merely stating a fact which he wishes to impress on the minds of each? What is the connection between the clauses introduced by ὅτι and the terms to which they are attached?

It may be observed first that there are two groups: in the former each clause is introduced by γράφω; in the latter by ἔγραφα; for there is a great preponderance of authority for ἔγραφα before ὅμιν παῖδια in the first clause of the second group. And it is further to be observed that the word πατέρες is not to be taken in its literal parental sense, but as equivalent to πρεσβύτεροι or γέροντες.

The chief interpretations of these terms are:

α. That the children, the young men, and the aged men are addressed separately.

β. That the neophytes, the mature, and the perfect Christians are addressed under the figures of the ages of life.

γ. That under τέκνια and παῖδια all Christians are addressed, being afterwards divided into the young and the old.

δ. That the same persons are addressed under different aspects of spiritual life.

ΓΡΑΨΩ ὑμῖν, τέκνία, ὅτι ἀφέωνται ὑμῖν αἱ ἁμαρ- 12
 τία διὰ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ. γράφω ὑμῖν, πατέρες, ὅτι 13
 ἐγνώκατε τὸν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς. γράφω ὑμῖν, νεανίσκοι, ὅτι

Against the three first it may be said, and I think conclusively, that the attributes assigned to each are not exclusively confined to the several ages of life or stages of spiritual perfection, but that each of them is true of all Christians to whom the apostle is writing, and especially that the quality attributed here to the *νεανίσκοι*, victory over evil, is in chap. iv. 4 attributed to *τέκνία*, and in v. 20 of this chapter knowledge is ascribed to *παιδιά*; and against the first especially that the order of age is not observed, children, old men, young men; not children, young, old, or *vice versa*; and against the third that it does not seem probable that the first term, properly denoting a particular age in each group, should be used in a general sense, while the other terms are used in a particular sense to denote the age they respectively signify. It seems to me that the terms denote, each of them, all Christians in the particular phase of spiritual life which is spoken of metaphorically as the virtue belonging to the several ages of life. Christian life presented itself to the apostle's mind under the image of the three stages of life: innocence belonging to childhood, strength to manhood, wisdom to old age; and these blessings belong to all Christians alike in the proportion in which they are Christians; and the possession of them supplies the strongest motive to the Christian perfection and obedience which St. John has been impressing, and is going to impress still further on them,

The difficulty now lies in the change from *τέκνία* to *παιδιά* and the repetition of the exhortation to each, with a change in the causal clause in the first of the series, while it is identical, or nearly so, in the second and third.

It would seem that the causal clause in each must express some fact or phrase of Christian existence suitable to the term to which it is joined. Thus forgiveness of sins, knowledge of God the Father, must express facts in the spiritual life of Christians viewed as *τέκνία* or *παιδιά*; knowledge of Christ some facts in the life of Christians viewed as old men; and strength and victory some fact in the life of Christians viewed as *νεανίσκοι*. It is clear, too, that something implied in the word *παιδιά* made the apostle to assign to it an attribute differing from that opposed to *τέκνία*.

12. γράφω ὑμῖν, τέκνία κ.τ.λ.]

Because your sins are forgiven you, in your new birth wherein you were made *τέκνία* Θεοῦ. Forgiveness of sins by the application of the all-purifying sacrifice of Christ was communicated to you, so that you were innocent of all sin as new-born babes are of actual sin. The notion of forgiveness of sins was connected with the Baptism, so in Acts ii. 38. The words of the apostle then are addressed to Christians as partakers

of the new birth with implied forgiveness of sins.

13. γράφω ὑμῖν, πατέρες κ.τ.λ.]

He addresses Christians as old men arrived at an age of wisdom and experience, because by virtue of their Christian *γνώσις* they know Christ, to know whom is the only real knowledge, as in that knowledge is implied the knowledge of God, and the mysteries and counsels of eternal life. τὸν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς] cannot be Christ merely the Author of Christianity

νεκικήκατε τὸν πονηρόν. ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, παῖδια, ὅτι
14 ἐγνώκατε τὸν πατέρα. Ἐγραψα ὑμῖν, πατέρες, ὅτι

(Socinus, Semler), nor yet merely God, the 'senex dierum' (Dan. vii. 9), but it is the term used by St. John to express the pre-existent, everlasting Christ. Nor can we suppose ἐγνώκατε to express the personal knowledge of Christ which the old man of St. John's day might be supposed to possess, but that spiritual knowledge of Christ which is part of the essence of vital Christianity. Nor can this knowledge arise from or consist in that experience in spiritual matters, a deeper insight into the mysteries of Christ, which might be supposed to arise from length of days, but that knowledge of Him through faith which is the privilege of all ages to whom He is revealed, whether they are babes or old men.

γράφω ὑμῖν, νεανίσκοι] Christians are spoken of as young men in the prime of their strength, because through Him who is in them they have overcome the world. 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith' (chap. v. 4); so that unless we are prepared to restrict faith to those in the prime of life, we must not suppose νεανίσκοι to be the actually young men, but to be merely applied in a figure to Christians generally as expressing the privilege of strength and victory by the power of faith.

ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, παῖδια] We now come to the real difficulty, the repetition of the addresses to the three classes, with a change from τεκνία to παῖδια, and from the attribute of forgiveness of sin to that of knowledge of the Father. It seems unlikely from the change of the attribute that exactly the same notion is intended by παῖδια

as was conveyed by τεκνία, and yet the difference between the two cannot be very great. Now if we compare παῖδια with τεκνία we shall be inclined to think it possible that the former rather denotes an actual though spiritual birth which takes place in Baptism whereby, as born again in and with Christ, the Christian receives a new nature and is a child of God as born of the Spirit who is God. The difference between the notions conveyed by τεκνία and παῖδια may be illustrated by the passage in the Collect for Christmas Day, 'Being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace.' In παῖδια the notion is rather that of relationship, whereby in Baptism a Christian becomes the adopted child of God, and becomes partaker of that spiritual communion with Him which is spoken of elsewhere under the term of knowing God (chap. ii. 4); so that the ground whereon the apostle now represents himself as addressing his readers is that they are the children of God by adoption and grace, and therefore in spiritual communion with God; and the word παῖδια, which expresses under a metaphor this Christian state, suggests to him the repetition of the two corresponding ages as figures of other Christian privileges and perfections, as motives for the striving after the practical holiness which he is recommending to his readers.

14. ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, πατέρες] The attribute here assigned to Christians as wise men is expressed in identically the same words, as if the knowledge of Christ were in itself a sufficient and an exhaustive expression for Christian wisdom.

ἐγνώκατε τὸν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς. Ἐγραψα ὑμῖν, νεανίσκοι, ὅτι ἰσχυροὶ ἐστε, καὶ ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν μένει, καὶ νενικήκατε τὸν πονηρόν. μὴ ἀγαπάτε τὸν 15

ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, νεανίσκοι κ.τ.λ.] The attribute of Christian victory is here set forth more completely by referring it to Christian strength, and this again to the indwelling presence of the Word of God. The word *abides*; if it does not abide Christian strength fails, and Christian victory is exchanged for defeat.

ἔγραψα] The only point now to be settled is the force of ἔγραψα as opposed to γράφω. It may be either for mere variety of speech. For we are not to think that the sacred writers were incapable, or despisers of elegance or novelty in their style. Or it may mean, what I have written as well as what I am now writing. Or ἔγραψα may be simply the aoristic force of 'I write' without reference to any particular time. It may be considered as laying emphasis on the act without reference (like γράφω) to any particular time.

ὅτι ἰσχυροὶ ἐστε κ.τ.λ.] First the fact of their strength, and then the subordinate notion, the cause and result stated in two co-ordinate clauses (Gr. 751. 3).

ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ] is not merely the revealed truths of God's Word, but rather the Incarnate Word. The article gives emphasis to the notion, and marks it off from any mere expression of the human energies of memory or habit. The article is used with both substantives in accordance with Gram. (461. 1). τοῦ Θεοῦ is not merely the genitive of definition or possession belonging or appertaining to God, but of *procession*, 'coming forth from God.' μένει—it did not once enter your hearts, and was then

cast out, but once given it abides in (ἐν ὑμῖν) your inner man.

νενικήκατε] Have conquered, and continue conquerors. τὸν πονηρόν, the emphatic article to signify *the* evil one; evil above all others, not merely evil personified, but evil existing in a distinct personality.

15. St. John now begins the practical exhortation for which he has been preparing them, by reminding each of his spiritual position and privileges.

μὴ ἀγαπάτε τὸν κόσμον] μὴ ἀγαπάτε, let it not be the object of your ἀγάπη. The word *κόσμος*, when it signifies the moral world, has the article. It is used without it in phrases such as καταβολῆς κόσμου, κτίσεως κόσμου (Gr. 447. 2. obs. 6); in 2 Cor. v. 19 it is used without the article, but it may here signify the whole creation as participating in the reconciliation to God, brought about by Christ (cf. Rom. viii. 21); in 2 Pet. ii. 5 ἀρχαῖον κόσμον is the physical world, and in Rom. xi. 12, 15 it is used to denote the Gentile world as opposed to the Jews; so that on the whole we may conclude that it has the article whenever it is intended to denote the world as opposed to the kingdom of Christ.

The usual sense attached to this word by commentators is: (1) Some part of the world: the heathen world and its practices, or the common multitude, or the greater part of men. (2) The spirit of evil which dwells and works in the world, the evil passions of men. (3) The perishing world as opposed to the spiritual world. From the first of these arises

κόσμον, μηδὲ τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ· εἰάν τις ἀγαπᾷ τὸν

the religious error of affecting singularity and withdrawal from common life. From the second the mistake of supposing that to renounce the world is to renounce those things which evil men enjoy. From the last the fancying that to renounce the world is to talk much of religion and heaven, and to avoid ordinary topics of interest. The fact is that the word *κόσμος* has a signification which embraces all these without excluding any of them, and yet looks at them in a different light.

The notion it expresses is not confined, as some would have it, to the gross sins, or idle amusements current in the world, or the having objects of temporal interest, or to going with the multitude; but it signifies the sphere of the unsanctified man, self, whatever that sphere may be, or however the natural self may energise. Business, politics, good works, if they centre in self, and self-glorification, come under the notion of *κόσμος*; nay, one may conceive that acts of duty, as the word is popularly used, if it be merely duty to self, without taking sufficiently into account the interests of others, may be of the world. Thus inflexible justice, if acted on with a view to self-esteem or satisfaction, would be of the world, while the mercy which was content to cast away the reputation or consciousness of strict adherence to duty would in its forgetfulness of self, i.e. in self-denial, belong to the better part. It should never be forgotten, in talking of the world as the object of religious avoidance, that the essence of worldliness is devotion to self; forgetfulness of self the essence of right Christian conversation. In fact

the verse is only an inculcation of true self-denial.

The word will of course assume some of the particular meanings given above according to the context. Where active human affections are ascribed to it, it means the men who make it up, the worldly-minded to whom self is everything, as 'the world hates you.' Where it is spoken of as *this world* it is the present state of things, which is the sphere of fallen man.

τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. The τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ gives an amplification and exegesis of *κόσμος*. Love for the world is the general spirit of selfishness; τὰ ἐν κ.τ.λ. the particular objects in which that self develops itself. It is not tautologous. Many persons might persuade themselves that they were free from a general love of the world, while their self was their master in some particular. The addition is eminently practical.

εἰάν τις ἀγαπᾷ] Throughout this Epistle the word for loving is ἀγαπᾷν, not φιλεῖν. It would seem as if ἀγάπη was more an energy of the inner man, less the result of outward circumstances than φιλία; more instinctive and more intense: the feeling of affection rather than the habit or state. It is the same notion as in James iv. 4. ἡ φιλία τοῦ κόσμου ἔχθρα τοῦ Θεοῦ; and Matt. vi. 24: Θεὸς δουλεύειν, and μαμωνᾶ δουλεύειν. St. John throughout this Epistle treats rather of the inner man, the affections within rather than the exhibition of the inner man in action. φιλεῖν τὸν κόσμον, ἐπίγεια φρονεῖν (Phil. iii. 19), and ἀγαπᾷν τὸν κόσμον differ, inasmuch as the first is rather the affection exhibited in action.

κόσμον, οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ πατρὸς ἐν αὐτῷ· ὅτι 16
 πᾶν τὸ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκός, καὶ ἡ
 ἐπιθυμία τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν, καὶ ἡ ἀλαζονεία τοῦ βίου,

φρονεῖν gives rather the deliberate purpose and choice, ἀγαπᾶν the source whence both spring, the inward affection or impulse.

τοῦ πατρὸς] Genitive of the object. Love towards the Father.

16. The reason of this condemnation of the moral world as it is is now given; it is not of God.

πᾶν τὸ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ] This is not equivalent to a masculine πάντες or κοσμικοί (Beda), nor yet, as most take it, as identical with τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ above. τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ signifies the whole particulars of the world. τὸ ἐν τῷ κ. the general character of the world, its essential nature.

ἡ ἐπιθυμία κ.τ.λ.] ἐπιθυμία and ἀλαζονεία and their objects exist in the moral world of which the apostle is speaking. We learn from this what the apostle means by κόσμος.

τῆς σαρκός] Not a genitive of the object, but of the source. So ὀφθαλμῶν the channel whereby the ἐπιθυμῖαι are aroused.

τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν] Not merely πλεονεξία, avarice, though of course this is aroused by the agency of the eyes; nor yet merely those things which are enjoyed by the eyes, as spectacles, theatres, &c.; but both of these limited notions seem to be contrary to the design of the apostle as expressed in πᾶν τὸ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ; he intends evidently to comprehend all the energies of the natural man as they are occupied in the moral world by the three expressions. And if we look accurately I think we shall see that ἐπ. τῆς σαρκός expresses those desires of the natural man which arise from nothing but from his fleshly nature, without

any definite visible object to rest upon; such as jealousy, revenge, the dormant desires. While ἐπ. τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν expresses the desires and lusts which are awakened by definite visible objects of temptation.

It has been commonly held that this triple division expresses the three cardinal vices of fallen man: the love of pleasure, money, power—victory over which seems to be signified in our Saviour's temptation. Some find here an opposition to the Three Persons of the Trinity, but such fanciful combinations, as they injure the simplicity, so do they violate the integrity of Scripture. Others (Bengel) again make ἐπ. τῆς σαρκός to be the *sensus fructivi*; ἐπ. τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν, *sensus investigativi*; and ἀλαζονεία τοῦ βιοῦ, the *arrogantia vitæ*, which seeks and procures a larger sphere for these appetites to energeise. Lücke finds a sort of climax of evil here, which I think most persons will find it difficult to trace. Lücke is right in saying that they are three leading principles under which all particulars will fall. Some place the other two under ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκός, as the deepest and most prevailing sort of love for the world; but this would identify ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρ. with ἀγάπη τοῦ κόσμου, which contradicts the context, and would make ἀλαζονεία a sort of ἐπιθυμία.

ἀλαζονεία τοῦ βιοῦ] completes the notion. ὁ βίος in N. T. is either *human life* or means of life. The genitive is subjective, proceeding from life.

ἀλαζονεία combines the notion of arrogance and falsity. It is not merely

- οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ πατρός, ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου ἐστί.
 17 καὶ ὁ κόσμος παράγεται, καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία αὐτοῦ· ὁ
 δὲ ποιῶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ, μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.
 18 Παιδιά, ἐσχάτη ὥρα ἐστί· καὶ καθὼς ἠκούσατε ὅτι

pride, or ambition, or haughtiness, but the temper of mind which has a false notion and reliance on self and the sphere of self, which overlooks the uncertainty of life, the shallowness of human wit and knowledge, the vanity of human place and honour, and places its trust and makes its boast on human nature or human life; which has its being and its satisfaction in science, or philosophy, or fame, or position, or power. These are the weaknesses of the more noble order of minds, whence statesmen, philosophers, inventors, &c., spring. This proud reliance on human life is not of the Father. In fact, the whole providence of God is designed to confound and disprove its assumptions. It may be rendered by the false pretence of life, or a proud trust in human life, or arising from human life—the pomps and vanities of the world.

ἐκ τοῦ πατρός] are not part of the original gift of God to man, and come not from Him (Gr. 621. 3. α.) or do not belong to Him (621. 3. β.). τοῦ πατρός, the Father, i.e. of Christians or of Christ.

ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου] are of the world, spring from the fallen moral world, and belong to it.

17. καὶ ὁ κόσμος παράγεται] Another reason why Christians should not love the world, and at the same time a link in the argument to show that the world and its lusts are not of God. The world passes away, but he who is ἐκ τοῦ πατρός (= ποιῶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ) passes not away.
 ἡ ἐπιθυμία αὐτοῦ] The desire be-

longing to it. αὐτοῦ is subjective. If it is objective ἐπιθυμία κόσμου = ἀγάπη κόσμου.

παράγεται] either a present for a future, referring to the passing away of the world at the last day, or expressing the expectation of St. John of the immediate passing away of the world, consequent on the second advent of Christ, or the world's daily passing away and passing onwards to its final annihilation; the shifting character of the world. It may be remarked that the only point on which we can certainly say that the Apostles were in error, and led others into error, is in their expectation of the immediate coming of Christ; and this is the very point which our Saviour says is known only to the Father.

ὁ δὲ ποιῶν κ.τ.λ.] The concrete for the abstract = ἀγάπη τοῦ πατρός, v. 15.

18. παιδία] This is an address to all his readers, whom he regards as if he were their spiritual father.

ἐσχάτη ὥρα] The apostle now brings forward an additional argument from the position of the world and its relation in point of time to the future state; and, at the same time, this serves as an introduction to the warning which the apostle now gives against errors in doctrine as he had before against errors in practice. It is the last time, and you know that in the last time Antichrist is to try your faith.

It is the last hour or season. This may either be an expression of the apostle's immediate expectation of

ὁ ἀντίχριστος ἔρχεται, καὶ νῦν ἀντίχριστοι πολλοὶ
γεγόνασιν· ὅθεν γινώσκουμεν ὅτι ἐσχάτῃ ᾠρᾳ ἐστίν.

the end of the world. The world is, as it were, on its death-bed; therefore you Christians, who are the heirs of eternity, ought not to cast in your lot with a world which is now at its last minute. In confirmation of which it may be observed that ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ is St. John's phrase for the day of Judgment. Or it may refer to the distinction drawn between the epoch before and the epoch after the Revelation of the Gospel Kingdom; cf. 2 Tim. iii. 1; James v. 3; 2 Pet. iii. 3 (but these three may be taken to mean in the Gospel era); 1 Pet. i. 5, ἐσχάτῃ καιρῷ. In Old Testament phraseology the Messiah's Kingdom is spoken of as ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις (Acts ii. 17; so in Heb. i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 20, ἐσχάτων χρόνων); so that the old commentators take ἐσχάτῃ ᾠρᾳ here to mean the epoch of the Redeemer's Mediatorial Kingdom, as being the last before the completion of all things. Some take the era expressed by ἐσχάτῃ ᾠρᾳ to begin at the destruction of Jerusalem; others (Socin., Grotius) to be the time immediately preceding that event. It seems, at all events, that the notion conveyed by these words to St. John's readers cannot be less than that the day of Judgment might come any day, as they were not to expect any further revelation from God, inasmuch as they were already living under the last dispensation. Before our Saviour's birth the world could look forward to some signal manifestation of God's power, some event or epoch as certain to intervene between them and the last day. The Christians of St. John's time needed to have this recalled to their minds, inasmuch as

the result of the disappointment of the expectation current in the first generation of the Church, of the immediate return of Christ, had led the succeeding generation to look at it as indefinitely and therefore certainly distant. (Cf. 2 Pet. iii. 4.) The lack of the article does not prevent our translating it *the last day*. Such familiar phrases are generally without the article (Gr. 447. 2). (Ecum. thinks it possible that ἐσχάτῃ may mean *the worst or evil time*.

καὶ καθὼς κ.τ.λ.] St. John uses as an argument (ὅθεν γινώσκουμεν κ.τ.λ.) to prove that this is the last time that Antichrist was in the world.

ἠκούσατε] marks the aorist. In St. Matth. xxiv. 11-28, where the presence of these enemies of Christ is mixed up in our Lord's mysterious prophecy about His coming again, cf. Mark xiii. 22; Acts xx. 29; 2 Tim. iii. 1: and St. John reminds his readers that this falling away of some, this enmity to Christ, and the perversion of His Gospel, is no discouragement to them, no reason for doubting the faith, but rather for being on their guard against being seduced by them, and recognising it as the kingdom in which our Lord prophesied such enemies should arise.

ἔρχεται] either present for future, *will certainly come*; or simple present, *is already amongst us, or is straightway coming*.

The distinction between ὁ ἀντίχριστος and ἀντίχριστοι πολλοί is that one is the spirit of evil, heresy, the other the heretical teachers who do his bidding (cf. 2 Epistle, 7). Others identify ἀντίχριστος with ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀμαρτίας, 2 Thess. ii. 3, and make

19 Ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐξήλθον, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἦσαν ἐξ ἡμῶν· εἰ γὰρ ἦσαν ἐξ ἡμῶν, μεμενῆκεισαν ἂν μεθ' ἡμῶν· ἀλλ' ἵνα

ἀντίχριστοι πολλοί the forerunners thereof; and the meaning would then be 'the presence of these Antichrists proves that the Antichrist, the forerunner of the last day, is about to come.' The construction probably is that the second καί answers to καθώς, as ye have heard that Antichrist cometh, so (in accordance with what you have heard, καί, Gr. 760. 3) there are many Antichrists.

γεγόνασιν] are in existence among us (pft.).

That the prophecy of Antichrist's coming does not lead us to expect some manifestation of a single personification of the evil one, in the shape of some individual man of surpassing wickedness, is clear from St. John's speaking of the prophecy being fulfilled by the existence of many individual Antichrists. Again, if we were to expect some such appearance in personified evil before the coming of Christ, the present world would not be ἐσχάτη ἔρα. It seems to be nearest the truth to say that co-extensive and co-æval with the kingdom of Christ, the spirit of evil is working against it, and those who, having belonged to the Church, work against the truth by inventing and propagating falsehood are the outward manifestations of their master, ὁ Ἀντίχριστος.

19. ἐξ ἡμῶν κ.τ.λ.] The first ἐκ is used in a sense more nearly approaching its local force (Gr. 621. 1. a.), the latter expressing intimately belonging to and appertaining to (621. 3. k.), while μετὰ gives the notion of external though intimate union and connection with.

ἐξ ἡμῶν] The body of Christians—

the Church. They separated themselves from us, which implies indeed a previous connection with us, but they were not a real, essential, internal part of the Church. They only belonged in appearance and profession, for if they had been thus intimately connected with us they would have remained in the external fellowship with us. These Antichristian teachers probably still claimed to belong essentially to the body of the Church. The apostle gives as the test of real union with Christ's body, viz. remaining in external union and fellowship (μεθ' ἡμῶν). Mark the aor. ἐξήλθον, marking the single act; the pft. expressing a permanent state, while the impft. ἦσαν signifies the duration of their state up to the time of their departure. The reason why God allowed their departure—why this schism was allowed to exist—was to purge false teachers and false doctrines from the Church, to disconnect errors taught by these people from the Church.

ἀλλά] but they separated that they might be clearly tested and exposed, as not belonging really to the body of Christ. External union is a test of internal fellowship. οὐκ εἰσι πάντες. This is not a particular negative as Meyer takes it, for in this sense οὐ is always joined to the πᾶς or πάντες (Gr. 905. 9. obs. 9. a.), but as an universal negative, 'none of them,' as this is invariably the sense when the οὐ is separated from πᾶς or πάντες by the verb. (See Gr. as above and 659. 8.) The whole mass of error is to declare itself as disconnected from the Church. Meyer takes it as if οὐ and πάντες were joined; to signify

φανερωθῶσιν ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶ πάντες ἐξ ἡμῶν. Καὶ 20
 ὑμεῖς χρίσμα ἔχετε ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου, καὶ οἴδατε πάντα.
 οὐκ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, ὅτι οὐκ οἴδατε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἀλλ' 21

that not all who are μεθ' ἡμῶν are ἐξ ἡμῶν, not all who are in the pale of the Church are really of the Church; but though this gives a good sense, yet we may not for the sake of any particular sense disregard the invariable usage of the N. T. And again, this explanation would make the subjects of φανερωθῶσιν show something of others, whereas the form of the construction indicates that what is shown is shown of themselves. If it had been φανερωθῆν it would have been different.

20. The first argument whereby he consoles the Church for the manifestation of Antichrist, and the falling away of some into error, is that it was prophesied, and a necessary consequence of false professors. It does not tell against the Church that some have left, nor against the Power whereby the Church exists. The second argument is that this error ought not to perplex them, for the Church, or rather, ye, as the Church, have the divine faculty of perceiving truth and distinguishing error. The apostle probably also intends to impress his words upon his hearers by appealing to their sense of truth.

καί] 'and further.' The notion that this is *adversative*, introducing a contrast between the apostate heretics and the Christians in the Church, does not seem to be necessary.

χρίσμα] only used in this Epistle here and verse 27. In the Old Testament it denotes the special manifestation of God's presence in the bestowal of some spiritual gift or power—the operation of the Holy Ghost—though as yet unknown as

the Third Person in the Trinity. So here it signifies the operation of the same Holy Spirit in the gift of spiritual discernment. The word properly applied to the gifts bestowed on kings, prophets, &c., here shadows forth the dignity of the Christian calling. χρίσμα either signifies the particular gift of understanding things Divine, or the general spiritual power which includes the foregoing. The latter is perhaps better. The general presence of the Holy Spirit keeps you, among other blessings, from falling into error. For ourselves we may learn that this χρίσμα is necessary to continuing in the truth.

ἔχετε] in verse 27 it is λάβετε; the possession is a result of receiving it from the Holy One.

ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου.] If χρίσμα is the presence of the Holy Spirit, ὁ ἅγιος must be not the Holy Spirit, but that whence the Holy Spirit proceeds, either God, 1 Cor. vi. 19, or Christ, John xv. 26, vii. 39. If χρίσμα is taken as only a particular gift of the Holy Spirit, then τοῦ ἁγίου is the Holy Spirit.

καί] 'et inde' (Bengel): the possession of χρίσμα is the source of knowledge.

πάντα] need not necessarily here refer to more than the matters in question (Calvin), but at the same time it falls under the ἀλήθεια promised in John xv. 26. Cf. verse 21.

21. ἔγραψα] Aoristic present sense. I write (act without reference to time past, present or future).

ὅτι οὐκ οἴδατε τὴν ἀλήθειαν] not because ye require to be instructed in the truth, but because knowing the

ὅτι οἴδατε αὐτήν, καὶ ὅτι πᾶν ψεῦδος ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας
 22 οὐκ ἔστι. Τίς ἐστὶν ὁ ψεύστης, εἰ μὴ ὁ ἀρνούμενος
 ὅτι Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ Χριστός; οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ
 ἀντίχριστος, ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν

truth, you are able to understand my meaning. What I say presupposes that you are in possession of the Gospel Truth.

καὶ ὅτι πᾶν ψεῦδος] Falsehood in general with especial reference to the heresy in question. Ye are not only in possession of the truth, but (καὶ) ye know (οἴδατε supplied) the difference between truth and falsehood. One p. clause denotes the admission and possession of the true—the other the exclusion of the false. This is the principle on which dogmatic theology proceeds in opposition to the school which, while holding truth, admits the possibility of the opposite (error or errors) being true also.

οὐκ] belongs to the predicate—is not; others take it with πᾶν = οὐδέν.

ἐκ τῆς ἀλήθ. (Meyer), does not spring from the truth, but from the Father of lies, John viii. 44; but it is better to take it, has no connection with, no coexistence with the truth (ἐκ, Gr. 621. 3. k.); τῆς ἀληθείας, truth generally (Article, Gr. 448. 2) or Gospel truth (448. 1).

22. τίς ἐστὶν ὁ ψεύστης] ὁ ψεύστης like the liar 'κατ' ἐξοχήν,' identical with Antichrist, or rather the present manifestation of Antichrist. It cannot be Antichrist in its most collective personality, for the holder of this particular heresy is not the only form of Antichrist. Who is the Antichrist? What the heresy of these times? would express St. John's meaning, or *what is the heresy to which I am alluding above?*

εἰ μὴ (Gr. 860. 5).

ὅτι Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἔστιν] οὐκ

repetition of negative in ἀρνεῖσθαι. The heresy was the denial that the person known as the man Jesus, or acknowledged by the Christians as their head, was identical with ὁ χριστός. There may have been, and indeed were, many forms of this heresy: that of the Jews, who denied that Jesus was the Messiah; that of the Gnostics, who said that the man Jesus was one being—the Æon Christ another; and this last, in some shape or other, must have been the one in St. John's mind. These various heresies agree in one point—the denial of the Divine nature and Divine office of Christ. And the warning which is read by the Spirit to men in all ages in these words is,—that he who denies these is on the side of Antichrist.

οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἀντίχριστος] οὗτος sc. ὁ ἀρνούμενος in the preceding verse. ὁ ἀντίχριστος, either the Antichrist spoken of above, or a member of Antichrist. One of the manifestations thereof.

ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν πατέρα] This is generally taken either as a sort of post nominative to ἐστίν in apposition to οὗτος, so that the sense is he who denies the Father and the Son is the Antichrist; or, as Meyer, a definition and characteristic of Antichrist. Another and perhaps a better way of taking it would be to make a stop at ἀντίχριστος, and connect these words antithetically with the following verse, supplying (Gr. 895. 1. c.) ἀρνεῖται as the verb before τὸν υἱόν: he who denies the Father (denies) the Son also; then in the

υἰόν. πᾶς ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν υἰόν, οὐδὲ τὸν πατέρα 23
 ἔχει. Ὑμεῖς οὖν ὃ ἡκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἐν ὑμῖν 24
 μενέτω. ἐὰν ἐν ὑμῖν μείνῃ ὃ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἡκούσατε,
 καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν τῷ υἱῷ καὶ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ μενεῖτε. καὶ 25
 αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαγγελία, ἣν αὐτὸς ἐπηγγείλατο ἡμῖν,

next verse, he who denies the Son has not the Father.

There is a twofold error in the denial of the Divine nature and relations of Christ. He who denies that God is the Father of Jesus naturally renounces Him who is the head of Christians, and further, he who thus cuts himself off by this denial and renunciation, cuts himself off from Christ Jesus, has, when viewed by the light of revealed truth, no true knowledge of God, inasmuch as he does not acknowledge Him in His revealed relation of the Father of Jesus. The idea of otherwise than as the Father of Jesus is not the true idea, it does not arise above the idea of natural religion, which is confessedly imperfect, and, as imperfect, false.

23, 24. Exhortation to hold by the truth.

Ὑμεῖς οὖν κ.τ.λ.] οὖν, since these heresies are abroad and are so fatal, abide by what ye have received. ὑμεῖς is either the nominative to the relative clause prefixed emphatically to it (Gr. 902. 3), or is the nominative to a verb paraphrased by μενέτω ἐν ὑμῖν as below, verse 27, and Acts vii. 40 (Gr. 477. 1).

ἀπ' ἀρχῆς] There is no trace of the gradual development theory here. The antiquity, so to speak, of the doctrine is alleged as a reason for the firm belief thereof. Their faith was being assailed by rationalistic novelties.

ἐν ὑμῖν μενέτω] *Allow the truth to abide in you.* The anacoluthon brings

strongly out the passive character of human faith. It is not the active energy of the reason grasping and retaining the truth, but the passive submission and obedience of the spirit to the indwelling spirit of truth. The same notion is discernible when the word is spoken of as seed. It is the energy of the seed which produces the plant, according as the ground allows it to grow. It is a most important view of the nature of Christian truth and of Christian progress.

25. αὕτη κ.τ.λ.] The demonstrative may either refer to what has gone before, in which case ζώην, though attracted, is in apposition to it, and the promise is that we should abide in the Father, or it may refer to ζώην, in which case the promise is 'eternal life.' It is true that, as Huther remarks in chaps. i. 5, iii. 23, v. 2, v. 14, αὕτη refers to what follows. But in each of these passages there is a verbal clause as an epexegetis of the substantive to which αὕτη immediately belongs, and this is clearly different from a construction which admits of the latter words being taken as a simple apposition. In the second way of taking it the connection with v. 24 is less immediate, and the καὶ seems to demand that something shall be applied to account for its use; such as, and *si in ipso maneamus* (Lap.), this eternal life is the promise which He has promised us; but it seems a sound principle of exegesis that that interpretation is the least pro-

26 τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον. ταῦτα ἔγραψα ὑμῖν περὶ
 27 τῶν πλανώντων ὑμᾶς. Καὶ ὑμεῖς τὸ χρίσμα ὃ ἐλάβετε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, ἐν ὑμῖν μένει, καὶ οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχετε ἵνα τις διδάσκη ὑμᾶς· ἀλλ' ὡς τὸ αὐτὸ χρίσμα

bable which, without any further reason, demands such an insertion to make it hold. So that it seems the former is the better of the two, especially as that is the promise especially held out by our Lord in St. John xvii. 2, the abiding being spoken of as the promise, which promise is eternal life, and therefore, in this point of view, being the promised bliss.

αὕτη] refers to the sentence before, is attracted to the feminine substantive ἐπαγγελία, and ζωὴν is attracted into the relative clause, agreeing with it in case, instead of the case of the noun to which it properly belongs. See Philemon, 10 (Gr. 824. ii. 4).

αὐτός] is Christ, as the centre round which the whole passage revolves.

26. ταῦτα] refers to the whole of this passage about Antichrist.

πλανώντων] marks that, in what he has written, he has the deceitful teachers in his mind, and thus furnishes us with a clue to parts of the passage.

27. καὶ] and further, as in v. 20. The anacoluthon is easily explained, ὑμῖν μένει = ἔχετε μένουσαν.

ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, sc. Χριστοῦ. τὸ χρίσμα, the Holy Spirit given in Baptism and abiding in the hearts of the faithful. ἐν ὑμῖν μένει] expresses the confident persuasion of the Apostles that their faith had stood against the heretical teaching.

οὐ χρεῖαν . . . ὑμᾶς] So οἶδατε πάντα, verse 20. It is a sort of apology to his readers for thus writing to them and warning them against

false teachers, but we learn from it that even those in whom the Spirit dwells need external aids to prevent their falling away. There is no need τοῦ διδάσκειν, but there is need of warning them against not using their knowledge and so losing it. Some think that there is an allusion to the false teachers who were intruding themselves into the preacher's office.

Perhaps the best way would be to take the sentence as conditional, though expressed in a positive form (Gr. 860. 8), as if it was a sort of answer in the hearer's mind to what the apostle has been urging on him: 'I know all this, as having the Spirit.' Then ἀλλὰ introduces the answer of the apostle, urging upon them nevertheless the necessity of their allowing the Spirit to abide in them, and not driving Him out by unholiness or self-willed disbelief. As ye have received this gift of the Spirit, and are taught of Him (= if this is the case), then it is your part to take care that you do not fall away from your knowledge; that ye continue in this knowledge to which the Spirit has led you. ἀλλὰ then would = 'nevertheless.'

ἀλλ' ὡς . . . ἐν αὐτῷ] This latter part of the verse may either be divided into two clauses, the first ending at ψεύδος—the protasis being, 'as He has taught you;' apodosis, 'so is what He taught you true' (and therefore you need no earthly teacher); and as He taught (teaches) or has taught you, so abide in what He is teaching;—or, the whole may be

διδάσκει ὑμᾶς περὶ πάντων, καὶ ἀληθές ἐστι, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι ψεῦδος· καὶ καθὼς ἐδίδαξεν ὑμᾶς μενεῖτε ἐν αὐτῷ. Καὶ νῦν, τεκνία, μένετε ἐν αὐτῷ· ἵνα ὅταν 28 φανερωθῇ, σχῶμεν παρρησίαν, καὶ μὴ αἰσχυνοθῶμεν

taken together; the words καθὼς ἐδίδαξεν ὑμᾶς being merely a repetition of the former clause; and ἀληθές ἐστι καὶ οὐ ψεῦδος being a parenthetical epexegetis.

If taken as one, the ὡς will be 'since;' καθὼς, 'according to what;' one being the reason for abiding in His teaching, the other the mode or manner. περὶ πάντων marks the comprehensive character of the teaching, so that they may be sure that the particular points in which the false teachers were assailing them were among those on which the Spirit had led them into truth.

The objections to this interpretation are not very strong. περὶ πάντων, it is said, marks that the clause is not merely parenthetical; but first it need not be so, for the περὶ πάντων has a proper emphasis if it is alleged as a reason for their abiding in His teaching as shown above. The same argument is deduced from καὶ οὐκ ἔστι ψεῦδος—but here again the emphasis is preserved in the clause taken as one, *His teaching is truth* (positive side), and *excludes the possibility of falsehood* (negative side).

The sentence seems to hang together better by making μενεῖτε ἐν αὐτῷ the exhortation deduced from the double or rather treble clause. But (either connexive or oppositive) since He teaches you, and gives you truth on all points, and excludes the possibility of error, and according to the teaching which He has given you, abide therein; the reason and the form

of their religious firmness in belief is given.

ψεῦδος] refers to the teaching of the χρίσμα.

μενεῖτε] may be taken for the simple imper. or expressing the sense in which the future gets an imperative force, 'I hope that ye will' (Beza). μένετε is the reading of Lachmann. ἐν αὐτῷ] Either (α) the χρίσμα, or (β) the teaching of the χρίσμα, or (γ) in Christ. The second is to be preferred.

28. καὶ νῦν] *and now*, marks that the exhortation it introduces is a consequence of what has gone before.

ἐν αὐτῷ] here, is Christ.

ἐὰν φανερωθῇ, or ὅταν φανερωθῇ; the latter is the most emphatic. The certainty is assumed, and the time only left undefined. In the former the probability, so high as almost to amount to certainty, is expressed. The latter is more in accordance with Scripture teaching on the subject; it is used Col. iii. 4.

σχῶμεν] The use of the 1st person marks that St. John includes himself in the advice he has just been giving, μένετε ἐν αὐτῷ.

παρρησίαν] The joyful confidence of the faithful at the day of judgment. Cf. the parable of the marriage of the king's son.

αἰσχυνοθῶμεν] The contrary to παρρησία, 'and he was speechless,' of the parable of the marriage supper. It may be taken passively, 'put to shame,' ἀπό, by Him, by the word proceeding from His mouth, 'depart, ye wicked' (Gr. 620. 3. d.); or in a

29 ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ. ἐὰν εἰδῇτε ὅτι δίκαιός ἐστι, γινώσκετε ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγέννηται.

III. *ΙΔΕΤΕ ποταπὴν ἀγάπην δέδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ πατήρ,

middle sense, 'may not feel ashamed,' *may not go in shame from Him*, ἀπ' αὐτοῦ (so Sirach xxi. 22).

παρουσία] Used by St. John only here; frequently in other N. T. writers.

29. He now shows what is the practical way of abiding in Christ. Not merely knowing that we have received an unction from the Spirit, not merely knowing all things, not merely a profession of abiding in Him, but doing righteousness.

ἐὰν almost = since.

δίκαιος] refers to Christ, as the subject of the thought, but αὐτοῦ below is, by virtue of its usual sense when joined to γεννᾶσθαι, God. There is an instance of αὐτός used twice in the same sentence, but referring to different persons, in Mark viii. 22. Others take δίκαιος as referring to God. γινώσκετε] is better taken as the imperative, 'follow out the result of your knowledge of Christ.'

ὁ ποιῶν κ.τ.λ.] Practical righteousness is here laid down as the test of being 'born of God,' and being born of God as the condition of practical righteousness: every one who ποιεῖ δικαιοσύνην, i.e. leads a practically righteous life, is able to do so as born of God, and whoever is born of God leads a practically religious life. And again, whoever is not born of God cannot lead a practically religious life; and whoever does not lead such a life is not born of God. The notion of *merely* imputed righteousness being the normal state of a Christian is overthrown.

We may remark, first, that St. John is writing to those who believed in Christ, and whose profession of faith is assumed throughout. There is therefore no ground given for the sufficiency of rational righteousness; and moreover this γεννᾶσθαι ἐξ αὐτοῦ is something which rational righteousness rejects. It is essentially a Christian notion. It is not 'every one, whether Christian or not, who leads a holy life who is born of God;' but 'he who being a Christian does so;' moreover, if a man has not received the regeneration by the Spirit, his life cannot really be a life of righteousness.

Secondly, that γεγέννηται, the perfect, marks that the present state of regeneration (but this comes more properly in the next chapter) is as long as he continues in this holy life, a child of God.

τήν] The article here has a demonstrative force, δικαιοσύνη in the Christian sense; or it may have a comprehensive force, δικαιοσύνη in its widest sense.

III. 1. Ἴδετε... κληθῶμεν] The apostle goes on to expatiate on the privileges arising from being 'born of God.'

Ἴδετε] bespeaks attention to what is coming; ἀγάπην διδόναι only here, given us for our own possession (not merely shown towards us), so that it gives us a title to the name of children of God. This ἀγάπη is not merely a gift proceeding from or a sign of love, but 'love itself.'

A Lapide interprets ἀγάπην as a state of mind within us, whereby and

ἵνα τέκνα Θεοῦ κληθῶμεν καὶ ἐσμέν. διὰ τοῦτο ὁ κόσμος οὐ γινώσκει ἡμᾶς, ὅτι οὐκ ἔγνω αὐτόν. ἀγαπητοί, 2
νῦν τέκνα Θεοῦ ἐσμεν, καὶ οὐπω ἐφανερώθη τί ἐσόμεθα·
οἶδαμεν δὲ ὅτι ἐὰν φανερωθῇ, ὅμοιοι αὐτῷ ἐσόμεθα,

by virtue of which we are called the Sons of God. But this title is of free gift: it is not the fact that we love God that gives us a right to be called His sons, but the fact that He loved us.

ἵνα] Paulus, De Wette, Lücke, 'so that,' as the effect and result of God's love; but it rather refers to ποταπήν, and expresses and points out the greatness and degree of God's love, whereby we enjoy this name (like the Latin *ut*). It equals ἐν τούτῳ οὖν, 'in that' we are called the Sons of God. ἵνα κληθῶμεν has an infinitival force, with the additional notion of intent on God's part.

κληθῶμεν] Not only are we, but we call ourselves and are commonly known as being. καλεῖσθαι is 'to be, or to be reputed to be' (Luke i. 32). The aor. conjunctive marks that the name has already been given, or it may be simply aoristic, giving the fact without any definite reference to time (Gr. 405. 2).

The addition καὶ ἐσμέν, if not interpolated, signifies the fact stated in its most expressive form as of the present, and marks that it is not a barren title we possess, but a reality. The contrast between κληθῶμεν and ἐσμέν (both depending on ἵνα) marks the fact still more forcibly.

Θεοῦ] not αὐτοῦ, because St. John wishes to give the full title.

διὰ τοῦτο . . . ἔγνω αὐτόν. διὰ τοῦτο] Because we are called and call ourselves the Sons of God. The world recognises not our claims, nor understands us, for, as it knows not

God, nor understands Him, or His attributes, or His nature, of course it cannot understand the nature and position of His children. This, which might seem at first sight to be a discouragement to our religious profession that we are disavowed by the world, is really a proof of our being the Sons of God, and not of the world. 'Blessed are ye when men persecute you,' &c. (Matt. v. 11; cf. Luke vi. 26).

2. ἀγαπητοί . . . ἐσόμεθα] God's love manifests itself in two points: (1) In time present, this life (νῦν), we are the children of God. (2) In the world to come, at the particulars of which we can only guess.

οὐπω ἐφανερώθη] Sc. τί ἐσόμεθα, standing as the nominative case, is not openly and beyond doubt revealed.

οἶδαμεν (δὲ) . . . καθώς ἐστι] We know so far, that we shall be like unto Him, though we can form no exact notion of what it is to be like Him. We know this, because we shall see Him in His real, pure nature; and none can see Him but those who are like Him. Souls which are not clothed with the Divine nature, so as to be conformed to it, will still have over them the same veil which hinders us from seeing God by faith now. When the flesh has passed away, and the Divine likeness shall have spread itself over the glorified soul and body, then shall we see Him face to face.

ἐὰν ἐφανερώθῃ] Sc. τί ἐσόμεθα

3 ὅτι ὁψόμεθα αὐτὸν καθὼς ἐστι. Καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἔχων
τὴν ἐλπίδα ταύτην ἐπ' αὐτῷ, ἀγνίζει ἑαυτὸν, καθὼς

again, or according to others 'Christ.' The context seems to lead to the former; but the same expression in the preceding chapter (v. 28), where *χριστός* is the subject makes the second probable. The meaning is practically the same, because the *φανέρωσις* will take place *ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ*.*

ἑμοιοί] We shall resemble Him; the same Divine attributes of wisdom, love, purity, which exist in an infinite degree in the Divine nature will exist also in us, and make up our being. So that, though not being gods or deified men, still being glorified men in our *σῶμα πνευματικόν* (I Cor. xv. 44), we shall be Godlike, and thus, brought into visible communion with Him, shall see even as we are seen. The deification of man is never spoken of in Scripture. He is to remain man, in the perfection of humanity, wherein the eyes will be open to discern God; not merely to know Him, or see Him, *δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι*, that is the privilege of the faithful now, but to see Him face to face. Hence we may see how little any righteousness of our own can absolutely fit us for heavenly life; how much we need the unspotted righteousness of Christ not only to hide our sins, but to clothe our souls, and spread throughout our being. Hence we may see that we must form in this life tones of mind and habits of feeling cognate to Christ's perfections, so that these may be perfected and glorified by Him hereafter. (On God's likeness in man see Arnd, 'Wahre Christenthum,' book i. chap. i.)

ὁψόμεθα] not merely 'know Him,' or see Him in the spirit, but actually. *καθὼς ἐστι*] 'actually' or in His real nature. At present we cannot see Him *καθὼς ἐστι*. Human nature, in its present state, could not endure it, even were the veil removed.

3. *καὶ πᾶς . . . ἐστὶ*] This gives either the condition of our attaining what we thus hope for (Lücke), or the proper result of such a hope on us. The latter is the best, as St. John throughout rather puts forward our privileges in their moral results on us, than these results as conditions of our attaining salvation and glory. He argues, so to say, from God's gifts to man's duties, not from man's duties to God's gifts. The distinction is not unimportant.

ἐλπίδα ταύτην] of being hereafter like unto God. *πᾶς ὁ ἔχων* cannot logically mean 'and no one else.' It may be rhetorically perfectly true. The logical deduction from the sentence is that 'he that does not purify himself has not this hope.' *ἔχειν ἐλπίδα ἐπ' αὐτῷ* (Gr. 634. 3. *d.*). *αὐτῷ*] sc. Θεῷ.

ἀγνίζει] like *ἀγνός*, has rather a negative notion of freedom from pollution and guilt, of keeping oneself unspotted from the world, rather than the positive one of holiness. The absolute possession of the Christian graces, which is a further stage in Christian perfection, is the absolute work of the Spirit without man's co-operation, while the turning away from and keeping free from pollution is rather the work of man, assisted

* To this note the MS. has an interrogation in pencil: What is the authority for *ἐν* being 'when'?

ἐκεῖνος ἀγνός ἐστι. Πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, καὶ 4
τὴν ἀνομίαν ποιεῖ· καὶ ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία.
καὶ οἴδατε ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ἐφανερώθη, ἵνα τὰς ἁμαρτίας 5

by the Holy Spirit. Hence ἀγνίζει αὐτόν. The weeds may be checked and rooted up by man's will, and unless this is done the seed sown by the Spirit is choked and hindered. There is a negative as well as a positive side to the Christian character, things to do and to leave undone. The positive, at least, is wholly the work of the Spirit; but this phrase is by its very form emphatically significant of man's free will, to say the least of it. ἀγνίζειν, see James iv. 8, 1 Pet. i. 22. καθὼς, after the pattern of Christ. ἐστὶ is the unlimited present (Gr. 395. 1).

4. πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν . . . ἀνομία. It seems as if St. John was arguing against some mistaken views on the subject of Christian duty. This is implied in the words in verse 7, μηδεὶς πλανᾷτω ὑμᾶς; and as the apostle is evidently insisting on the moral identity between ἁμαρτία and ἀνομία, it would seem as if those against whom he is arguing had tried to establish a difference between them. We may observe further that the brotherly love and inward purity on which the apostle had spoken so much might be looked upon as not binding on man by virtue of any human law. It might be said that violations of them were only violations of what might be looked upon by ultra-moralists as due to man's self (ἁμαρτίαι), not violations of what was due to society as embodied in νόμοι (ἀνομίαι), either the νόμοι of the Jewish system, in which case the objector would be a Jew, or the νόμοι of the heathen systems, in which case the objector would be a heathen; in either case

they may have been converted from Judaism or heathenism, but not realising the spiritual and internal morality, may have argued that as the sins opposite to these graces insisted on by St. John concerned only a man's self, and not the well-being of society, they could not be regarded as necessary. This St. John briefly but emphatically meets by stating that the distinction on which the argument is founded does not exist; that an act of ἁμαρτία is an act of ἀνομία, and that ἁμαρτία in the abstract is in the Christian scheme, and under the Christian νόμος, identical with ἀνομία.

5. καὶ οἴδατε . . . οὐκ ἐστὶ] Another direct answer to those who would excuse ἁμαρτία on the ground of its not being ἀνομία is in the known and recognised facts—1st. That Christ came to take away ἁμαρτίας, and therefore ἁμαρτίαι must be at all events contrary to the Christian profession; and 2nd. That Christ Himself was perfectly free from ἁμαρτία, from those sins of impurity and envy and hatred, *et sim.*, which concern a man's internal state rather than the well-being of society; and Christ is the type of Christian perfection, and consequently of Christian duty. ἐφανερώθη] marks Christ's pre-existence.
ἵνα . . . ἄρῃ] ἀρεῖν ἁμαρτίας may mean either to 'take away our sins,' i.e. the punishment of them, by dying on the cross, or 'taking them away from our hearts.' ἀρεῖν is throughout the N. T. used for taking up, or taking away, except possibly in John i. 29, where the same phrase is used. Of

6 ἡμῶν ἄρη· καὶ ἁμαρτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστι. πᾶς ὁ ἐν

course, whatever sense it is used in, there must be taken to be the sense intended here; and, as the sense of *αἶρειν* in the LXX is always to take away (while *φέρειν* is to bear), it seems better to make it express in both places the sanctifying results of Christ's bearing our sins on the cross, much the same as v. 8, *ἵνα λύσῃ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διωβόλου*, the sins themselves, and not only the punishment thereof. Jesus Christ is represented not merely as the motive to the human will (in the Pelagian view), but as Himself taking sins away. All that man does is not to resist, and he does it by the aid of the Spirit, consequent on His death and resurrection.

καὶ ἁμαρτία . . . ἔστι] The second reason is that Christ is without *ἁμαρτία*, so that as those who would be Christ's must be conformed to Him, they must be without *ἁμαρτία* also. It does not refer to His power of taking away sin, but to the Christian's duty. Our Lord, as man, had the *posse peccandi*, otherwise he could not have been tempted by the Devil; but as not descended perfectly from Adam, he had not the *velle peccandi*. *ἔστι*] marks the eternal attribute of an eternal God.

πᾶς ὁ ἐν αὐτῷ . . . ἁμαρτάνει] This does not mean that it is impossible for one who is in Christ, i.e. a Christian, to sin. Nor yet can we limit the word *ἁμαρτία* to wilful sin. Such arbitrary limitations at once lead us from the real sense of a passage, and are founded on a principle of interpretation which destroys Revelation. The key to the whole passage is in *μένειν*, and the solution is given by St. Augustin, 'in quantum in Christo manet, in tantum non peccat.' So that *ἁμαρτάνει* has its natural sense

of committing actual sin. Before a man who has become a Christian, i.e. has been made a new creature by the indwelling of Christ and the presence of His Spirit, can allow an inward desire to develop itself into actual sin, he must in some way or other, by harbouring or encouraging instead of resisting the desire, or dwelling with satisfaction on the indulgence of the passion, by wishing that he might sin without offending God, or in some such way have let go his hold on Christ and diverged from Him, and done despite to the Spirit of Grace, whereby he might have resisted and stifled the desire before it was developed into the act; and in proportion to the greatness of the sin, in that proportion must he have departed from Christ, ceased to abide in Him, and so far ceased to be a Christian. This is in perfect harmony with the rest of the Gospel scheme, and with self-experience, and, moreover, establishes that which it is St. John's object to set forth, that the external life of a Christian is a sure and accurate index of his internal state, as is clearly laid down in v. 7. It is clear that some persons taught in ancient as in modern times that the external act is no evidence of the internal state; that the elect may sin without its being to them any ground for decreased assurance as to their state of grace. The interpretation of Besser (approved by Huther), that a real Christian does not sin with his will, does not himself commit sin, but rather *suffers* it in spite of resistance, is a modified form of the same teaching. It is true that the Christian's will, the Christian *I*, is against sin, and that he sins in spite of his Christian nature, but still it is the man

αὐτῷ μένων, οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει· πᾶς ὁ ἁμαρτάνων, οὐχ

who sins, it is the man who will be judged for sin. The question is whether the Christian element of faith, the Christian principle of abiding in Christ, is the strongest and most natural in him, and this is decided by his practical acts. This interpretation puts a forced meaning on ἁμαρτάνει. St. John does not mean to put forth sinlessness as a result of being in Christ, but actual commission of sin, as a test of the man's having so far left Christ. It is not '*I am in Christ, and therefore do not sin,*' but '*I have sinned and therefore must have been pro tanto removed from Christ.*'

The arguments against which St. John is contending may be thus stated:—

1. Many of these things which you (St. John) argue against are merely offences against self, are in matters of important obligation, such as brotherly love, which is forbidden by no law, either positively or negatively. St. John answers this by identifying ἁμαρτία and ἀνομία, and showing that breaches of the one are breaches of the other, and by showing—*α.* That Christ came to release us from these ἁμαρτίαι; and *β.* That Christ was entirely free from them.

2. That an outward act of sin does not always imply a betrayal of Christ, inasmuch as it was not the man that sinned, but only the bad part of him. This St. John answers by stating that as long as, and in proportion as, a man abides in Christ he can resist sin; and that if he sins in that same proportion, the eye of his mind has been blinded, and his understanding darkened. Hence the importance of keeping our sight of Christ clear, and our knowledge fresh, by religious meditation and exercise.

πᾶς ὁ ἁμαρτάνων . . . αὐτόν] The same truth is stated in another shape. There must be inward falling away before there can be outward sin. If we were to take this passage to mean that the commission of sin proves that the sinner has never known or seen Christ, with its corresponding proposition that one who has once seen or known Christ can never fall into sin, the result would be in the very teeth of numberless passages which speak of and imply the possibility of a Christian's falling away and recovery. There is not a single one of the Gospels or Epistles which does not contradict this teaching, and therefore this interpretation must be at once put aside, as not giving the real meaning of the passage. It might be supposed that St. John was speaking of a perfect Christian state, in which, seeing Christ and knowing Him in reality, the man could not sin; and then the passage would mean '*a perfect Christian cannot sin.*' But this is an impossible state, for '*if we say we have no sin,*' &c. In this Epistle, ii. 13, those to whom St. John is writing are spoken of as knowing the Father; and the solution lies, I think, in the perfects, which should, in our idiom, be translated by the presents, marking a past state continuing into present time, '*does not continue to know.*' It marks that though the state may have existed in past time, it exists no longer now. (Ellicott ad Ephes. ii. 8. The perfect connects, the aorist disconnects the past and present.) The act of sin is a sign that the spiritual vision has been darkened, so that Christ is no longer present to the eye of the mind; in different degrees, according to the degree of the sin, Christ is more or

- 7 ἑώρακεν αὐτόν, οὐδὲ ἔγνωκεν αὐτόν. Τεκνία, μηδεὶς
 πλανάτω ὑμᾶς· ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην, δίκαιός
 8 ἔστι, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος δίκαιός ἐστιν. ὁ ποιῶν τὴν

less obscured; and Christ is no longer known, i.e. the spiritual understanding has become dead, so that Christ is no longer present in the thoughts of the rational man. The perfect is used because the state has begun, but has not continued; 'is not in a state of light and knowledge at the moment of the sin' (for this sense of the perfect see Gr. 399. obs. 5). There must be an inward obscuration and diminution of the spiritual organs and spiritual reason before sin can be committed. Thus, lust bringeth forth sin, by hiding our Saviour from our view, and lessening our intuition and apprehension of Him. Some suppose a difference in degree between *ὄραν* and *γινώσκειν*, though they are not agreed which is the higher, so that we cannot lay any stress on this supposed difference. The one, *ὄραν*, is more instinctive than the other, *γινώσκειν*. In the latter our reason and intellect come in. *ὄραν* cannot refer to the personal sight of Christ, inasmuch as that is an historical fact in a person's life which no sin could take away.

7. *τεκνία . . . ὑμᾶς*] The endeavour of false teachers in favour of false doctrine in practice, the separating the inward state from the outward life of a Christian, is here definitely pointed out. The error is twofold. 1. He who has accepted Christ cannot sin. 2. A man cannot sin while in a state of grace. The answer given by St. John is that a man cannot sin as long as grace remains unimpaired in Him, and that every sin denotes an antecedent diminution of grace. Darkness without betokens

that the light is in that degree extinguished.

ὁ ποιῶν . . . ἐστίν] The practical test of a man's being in a state of holiness (*δίκαιος*), at least in the way in which Christ is holy (*καθὼς . . . ἐστίν*), the way in which a man can be a son of God in Christ, is practical righteousness or holiness of life. It does not seem to be merely after the example of Christ, but to describe and define the holiness of which the apostle is speaking, as opposed to the heathen notions on the subject. False teachers might take advantage of the dictum in ancient philosophy, that just actions did not necessarily prove a man to be righteous; but the actions of Christian morality (*καθὼς ἐκεῖνος δίκαιός ἐστι*) can proceed from nothing but a moral state produced by faith and grace, faith supplying the materials, so to say, and grace working them up.

8. ὁ ποιῶν . . . ἐστίν] The commission of sin marks a falling away from grace, a renewal of the old man, a falling away either in belief or in the tone of the mind, by the indulgence of lusts; and that he who commits it is, as far as his sin goes, a child of the Devil. Of course this may be viewed as extending over a man's whole life, and then it may be said absolutely that he is a child of the Devil. *ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου, comes*, as it were, *is born of*; his inward evil life springs from an indwelling evil spirit, as the life of the faithful Christian springs from the indwelling Holy Spirit.

ὅτι . . . ἁμαρτάνει] This does not express the cause why the Devil is

ἁμαρτίαν, ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστίν· ὅτι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὁ διάβολος ἁμαρτάνει. εἰς τοῦτο ἐφανερώθη ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἵνα λύσῃ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου. πᾶς ὁ 9 γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ, ὅτι σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ μένει· καὶ οὐ δύναται ἁμαρ-

the source of evil, but a proof that he is so. Human sin was posterior in point of time to the sin of the Devil. The Devil sinned first, and then seduced man to sin; he is to man the father of sin.

ἀπ' ἀρχῆς] Not the creation of the world, nor the commencement of the human race, nor the commencement of the Devil's existence, nor the moment of his fall, but in relation to human sin.

ἁμαρτάνει] is the indefinite present, as if the whole of time were lying before us in an unbroken present (Gr. 395. 1).

9. εἰς τοῦτο . . . διαβόλου] As sin is the characteristic energy of the Devil, so on the other hand our Saviour's function on earth was to destroy his work, to hinder sin in man and around him. The opposition between the children of God and the children of the Devil is thus brought prominently forward in confirmation of the doctrine that the doing the works of the Devil, or abstaining from them, are the tests of a man belonging to, or not belonging to Christ.

πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος . . . μένει] expresses the same truth as before,

though in another form. Abiding in Christ before constituted a man's freedom from sinning; now it is the new birth, the sonship of God. As long as the spiritual life, sown at the recreation of the new man, abides in its full vigour, sin is impossible. If a regenerate man sins, the seed must more or less have ceased to live, despite in some shape or other must have been done to the Spirit of Grace. μένει marks the previous existence of the seed, and its abiding is given as the reason for the man's not committing sin. γεγεννημένος, he who having been born continues in that new birth.

σπέρμα] may be either the 'word of God,' as in the parable of the sower, or the 'word of truth,' James i. 18; but the context γεγεννημένος points rather to the Divine Life, whereby the new man is created and lives, or, in other words, to the gift of the Holy Ghost, whereby (σπορᾶς ἀφάρτου, 1 Pet. i. 23) a new spiritual life is superadded to the natural life, analogous to it. This σπέρμα is not love or any other Christian grace, for these are rather fruits of the seed than the seed itself.

αὐτοῦ] of God; given by God.

καὶ οὐ . . . γεγέννηται] The two points to be considered are, first, the meaning of γεγεννημένος and γεγέννηται, and secondly, of ἁμαρτάνειν. In this passage γεγεννημένος and γεγέννηται cannot be taken simply as past tenses, whatever meaning we may give to ἁμαρτάνειν, for if so it will contradict very many passages of Scripture, if not the whole practical teaching of the Gospel. If it be so taken, then no man can have been born of God, for all men sin (if we say that we have no sin, &c.). But men are spoken of as born of God in this very Epistle, and therefore it cannot be taken literally. Besides which

it stands in contradiction to the exhortation to all Christians without exception to take heed lest they fall, expressed in various ways, but all with the same bearing on this passage. We are compelled therefore by Scripture itself to seek some other explanation of it.

1. We may throw aside the notion that *ἁμαρτάνειν* means deadly sin or final apostasy, &c., as well as that *οὐ δύναται* merely signifies 'unusual' or 'difficult.' Such methods are evasions rather than solutions. They are only justifiable when they are necessitated or suggested by the context. How far this is the case here we shall presently see.

2. If we take *γεννημένος ἐκ Θεοῦ* to mean an abstract state of perfection, which in this world can exist only in idea, we get rid of the difficulty stated above; but we also take from the passage its practical character, which is evidently the primary point in St. John's mind, inasmuch as he is laying down the *practical* connection between regeneration and holiness of life, so as to serve as a test for each man to judge his state by, and as an answer to the erroneous teaching which held that sin did not destroy or interfere with a man's assurance of being born of God, i.e. in a state of salvation. If the invariable connection only holds good in idea and not in practice, the practical use of it would be gone. There is no such state in life, and therefore supposing sin to disprove a man's being in the ideal state of perfection, it would have no bearing on his having attained to such a degree as was attainable by man. Besides which Christians are spoken of in this Epistle as born of God, and children of God, and therefore it is reasonable to suppose that the phrase here expresses an actual, and not an ideal perfection.

3. Huther, stating truly that the great object of the apostle is to establish the contradiction existing between sin and a state of grace, not merely in idea, but in practice, solves it by saying that the Christian does not sin and cannot sin, though the old man in him does and can; the Christian hating sin is trying to purify himself, and is fighting against sin. But this solution seems inadmissible. It is unpractical, as anyone might persuade himself that he had enough good in him to be born of God, and that even though he sinned, yet as far as he was a *τέκνον Θεοῦ* he did not sin, but only as far as he was a natural man. So that all that an act of sin would bear witness to would be that there was evil in the man as well as good, while it would further teach that the Christian was not responsible for the evil within him, as being forced upon his better self by the power of evil. But it is the compound man who is to be judged by his works; we may not safely assign the evil to some other self which is not responsible. In fact, this solution—however true may be the theory on which it is built, that there are two principles within us, natural evil or the old man, and infused grace or the new man—is one of the worst forms of antinomianism, inasmuch as it is plausible and has something to rest on, and explains away the apparent contradiction between sin and God which antinomianism involves. It would moreover entirely destroy the practical character of the passage, and we cannot conceive St. John to be stating the doctrine as a dogma of ideal psychology, but as a fact in actual religious life.

We shall, I think, fulfil the necessary conditions of being in harmony with the rest of Scriptural teaching, and of having a direct practical bearing on life,

and on the context, if we take *γεννημένος* in the very usual perfect sense of a state beginning in past time, and continuing into the present; i.e. it is not only a thing of the past, but of the present, and yet not only a thing of the present but of a past, so as to be linked into a man's moral being. The force of the perfect will come out more clearly if we contrast it with the sense which the present or aorist would have given. *γινόμενος ἐκ Θεοῦ* would have been merely the act of regeneration either present, or viewed as present. *ὁ γεννηθείς* would have been the same viewed as *past*. Then if we take *ἁμαρτάνειν* to mean any sin whatever, he who is in a regenerate state, in whom his spiritual life is a thing actually in power within, he cannot sin. He cannot sin, that is, without having in some degree fallen away from the state of regeneration, without the seed of God having in some sort and degree ceased to operate within him. His faith in Christ must have been somewhat obscured, either by decrease in itself, by his forgetting some revealed point of God and His will, or by being overshadowed and dimmed by some lust or evil passion, and thence, his safeguard and stay being withdrawn, the old man developed into the act of sin. So that the act of sin is not to be regarded only as an act of disobedience to God, counterbalanced by his faith, and therefore to be unheeded, but as a proof that his faith is in some degree failing, that he is in some degree falling. And if this is true of *all* sin, much more is it true of the great violations of God's will. It expresses very forcibly the opposition between sin and a state of salvation, so that those whom the apostle has in his mind may both by their sin and by their calling be convinced and warned into repentance. It is one lesson of our Lord in His parable of the strong man armed keeping his house and being in safety. If he lays aside his arms his enemy becomes stronger than he. He that is in us is stronger than he that is in the world as long as we have Him dwelling in us; but when He departs, and in degree as He does depart, lust can bring forth sin. This tells us how one who has faith can fall away. It is not that faith is not strong enough to win the victory, but our faith has become faint and weak; thus a small secret bosom sin, or desire to sin, can bring forth death. Nor is it hard to see how this is. The temporary suspension of reason will illustrate this. A man in his senses would never commit suicide; before he can commit the act the perceptions and powers of reason must have been obscured and weakened. As long as our faith keeps God and Christ and the Holy Ghost in their several functions, vividly and actively in the soul, so long does a temptation when it comes before us remind us of the danger of sin, and we reject it by the further help of God's grace. But if our remembrance of God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost—if faith, that is—be but dim, if the passion of hatred for instance hides these things from us, then the temptation or opportunity suggests only the gratification which belongs to the natural man, and we accept and act upon it.

The next point is the force of *ἁμαρτάνειν*. If this comprehends all sin, great and little, it must either mean that every sin of every hue implies some falling away from a state of regeneration, the argument from this being *a fortiori* of great sins; or it must be merely a general statement of the opposition between sin and the state of regeneration, but without any direct bearing on the test which St. John is laying down; or we must give *ἁμαρτάνειν* a special sense. This can only be done if we are led to it by Scripture, or by the context,

- ΙΟ πάνειν, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ γεγέννηται. ἐν τούτῳ φανερά
 ἐστὶ τὰ τέκνα τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὰ τέκνα τοῦ διαβόλου.
 Πᾶς ὁ μὴ ποιῶν δικαιοσύνην, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ,
 ΙΙ καὶ ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ. ὅτι αὕτη
 ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγγελία ἣν ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἀγα-

or both. By Scripture we are led to say that ἁμαρτάνειν cannot mean every the smallest sin, because then there would be no such state as the being born of God; and the context gives us the sort of ἁμαρτία which the apostle speaks of. In verse 10 πᾶς ὁ μὴ ποιῶν δικαιοσύνην καὶ μὴ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν is spoken of as οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ Θεοῦ; so that we may safely lay it down that even supposing that every sin implies a falling away, and that there is an opposition between sin and regeneration so strong that it can hardly be overstated, yet what St. John has in his mind is rather the particular ἁμαρτία mentioned in v. 10, viz. unrighteousness of life, and the lack of brotherly love.

ἐν τούτῳ . . . διαβόλου] Herein is the open difference between the sons of God and the sons of the Devil; between those who are Christ's and those who are not. In proportion as a professing Christian sins he may be sure that he has passed from his state of adoption into the power of evil. He can make no mistake about it. ἐν τούτῳ is by some referred to what goes before, by others to what comes after. The fact is it refers to both. What has gone before is re-stated in a more distinct and more practical form in the latter part of the verse. τέκνα τοῦ διαβόλου is not found elsewhere, but the notion is applied by our Lord to the Jews (John viii. 44). Socinus says that these words mark that a man must be either one or the other; but still it would seem that there are many degrees of each, and stages between them. A man at the moment of his sin has cast off God, and obeyed the Devil, but repentance regains faith and sonship.

πᾶς . . . αὐτοῦ] The doctrine laid down above is stated in its negative and more practical form, bearing more definitely on the apostle's object,

which here is not so much to show that good works argue a state of grace as that evil works prove the contrary.

ὁ μὴ . . . δικαιοσύνην] he who does not lead a life of righteousness and (καὶ . . . αὐτοῦ) love. The former is common to the Jewish and indeed to all religions which imply morality. The latter is the new commandment of the Gospel, not recognised in other systems. Others take καὶ ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ as a mere explanation of δικαιοσύνην, but if so it is difficult to see why St. John should have thus repeated himself. Moreover, the ὁ before μὴ ἀγαπῶν is rather against this, for it is distinctive. The fact is that to the ancient mind love of brethren was not co-ordinate with δικαιοσύνη.

τὸν ἀδελφόν] the article expresses the whole class.

οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ] = οὐκ ἔστιν τέκνον Θεοῦ.

ΙΙ. ὅτι . . . ἀλλήλους] gives the reason why the ἀγάπη spoken of is to be considered a necessary grace of regeneration because it was a characteristic point of Christian morality, as

πῶμεν ἀλλήλους· οὐ καθὼς Κάϊν ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ ἦν, 12
καὶ ἔσφαξε τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ· καὶ χάριν τίνος
ἔσφαξεν αὐτόν; ὅτι τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ πονηρὰ ἦν, τὰ δὲ
τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτοῦ δίκαια. μὴ θαυμάζετε, ἀδελφοί 13
μου, εἰ μισεῖ ὑμᾶς ὁ κόσμος. Ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν ὅτι 14
μεταβεβήκαμεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν, ὅτι

set forth in the very first part of His ministry, that we love one another; cf. Matt. v.

ἀπ' ἀρχῆς] The commandment to love one another, in the breadth of its application as taught by Christ, was one of the earliest features of the Gospel. The force of ἀρχῆς is defined by ἠκούσατε, ye have heard as Christians, and therefore points to the time when men became Christians, i.e. to the earliest times of Christian teaching. If it had been ἡ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς it might have been referred to any time which might be viewed as an ἀρχή; but the word ἠκούσατε limits it to the ἀρχή of the period when it was possible for Christians to have heard it.

ἴνα] gives the contents, not the object of the ἀγγελία, though of course the latter is implied.

12. οὐ . . . αὐτοῦ] Some supply οὐκ ὤμεν, and make it depend upon ἴνα; but the grammatical solecism is quite a sufficient objection. Others supply 'Let us not be so minded,' but οὐ in such a formula is inadmissible; if any verb is to be supplied it must be in the indicative. De Wette, taking it as an inaccurate comparison of opposed objects, says we ought to attempt to complete the phrase. In other words, that it is an idiomatic formula for negative comparison; but it may be grammatically explained by joining οὐ as a privative to καθὼς, making it equal ἀνομίως ἢ, or, as we say, not . . . as; see John vi. 58.

τοῦ πονηροῦ] i.e. διαβόλου, masc. not neuter. Cain was a child of Satan, as Christians are sons of God. καὶ ἔσφαξεν] καὶ is consequential, = ὅς (Gr. 752. 2. obs.). σφάζειν marks the violence of the act. The aor. of the single act is contrasted with the impf. ἦν of the state.

καὶ . . . αὐτόν] This form marks that the apostle laid emphasis on the point which it introduces.

ὅτι . . . δίκαια] The wickedness of Cain's works shows that it is by evil works that a man becomes and is a child of Satan; and therefore evil works belong to the children of Satan, and not to the children of God. The evil works caused God to reject Cain's sacrifice, and then arose anger and jealousy; or the evil works may refer to Cain's sacrifice directly, as being abominable in God's sight, embodying and expressing pride in some shape or other.

13. μὴ . . . κόσμος] St. John introduces this *par parenthèse*, suggested by the context, that evil always hates good, even as Cain hated Abel, and therefore the hatred of the world need not surprise us.

εἰ] does not express any actual doubt or uncertainty (Gr. 804. 9).

14. ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν . . . θανάτῳ] Another characteristic and recommendation of brotherly love is that it is a test of our spiritual life and a ground of assurance.

μεταβεβήκαμεν] We have passed

- ἀγαπῶμεν τοὺς ἀδελφούς· ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφόν,
 15 μένει ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ. πᾶς ὁ μισῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ,
 ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἐστί· καὶ οἶδατε, ὅτι πᾶς ἀνθρωπο-
 16 κτόνος οὐκ ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἐν αὐτῷ μένουσαν. Ἐν
 τούτῳ ἐγνώκαμεν τὴν ἀγάπην, ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν
 τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἔθηκε· καὶ ἡμεῖς ὀφείλομεν ὑπὲρ

from death and are in a state of life ; from our old state of death, the natural man, into the new state of life, the regenerate man.

δτι] of course refers to οἶδαμεν. Brotherly love is the ground of our assurance.

ὁ μὴ . . . θανάτῳ] The lack of brotherly love is a proof that a man has not passed from the natural to the regenerate state, or has not continued in the latter.

15. πᾶς . . . ἐστί] Another motive for cultivating brotherly love, and for viewing it as a test of a regenerate state, is the heinousness of the contrary.

ἀνθρωποκτόνος] Murder is only hatred carried out into act. The man who hates has murder in his heart. The notion is suggested by the mention of Cain.

πᾶς . . . οὐκ ἔχει] Rather an universal affirmative, οὐκ being joined as a privative to ἔχει; and equalling 'is without' (Gr. 659. 8. and 905. 9. a.).
 ζωῇ] Spiritual life, the essence of the regenerate state.

μένουσας] may be taken to mean that the αἰώνιος ζωῇ once abiding had passed away ; but St. John is speaking here too generally of ἀνθρωποκτόνοι in general to admit of its being confined to those who having had grace and life had fallen away into dead work ; in which case the word here only means that permanent existence which is a characteristic of

the ζωῇ αἰώνιος, even though liable to fall, and often falling. Lücke: ἔχειν τε μένον 'bezeichnet den bleibenden und vollen Besitz einer Sache.' But, on the other hand, as St. John has in his mind principally the state of those to whom he was writing, he may have used a word in a sense applicable to them, though not perfectly suited to the context.

16. ἐν τούτῳ . . . τιθέναι] Another characteristic of love is that it is practical, and therefore must be judged of by its works.

ἐν τούτῳ] refers to what follows.

ἐγνώκαμεν] know intellectually, have an idea of what love is, not the love of Christ, nor yet the love of God, but love in the abstract. We can understand the nature of love, and to what a degree it extends.

ἐκεῖνος] Christ.

ψυχὴν τιθέναι] As it were to pay one's life, or to lay it down. The passages John x. 17; xiii. 37; xv. 13 favour the latter. The former is derived from the latter, in a sense analogous to that of 'pay;' frequent in Demosthenes. Cf. Reiske Intro. Dem., and Dissen. Demosth. de Coroná. ὑπέρ] This is taken from John x. 11, where our Lord speaks of Himself as the Good Shepherd, who lays down His life for the sheep. When we look into this simile our Saviour's act stands forth as a vicarious sacrifice. A good shepherd encounters at the risk and loss of his own life the

τῶν ἀδελφῶν τὰς ψυχὰς τιθέναι. ὅς δ' ἂν ἔχη τὸν 17
 βίον τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ θεωρῇ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ
 χρεῖαν ἔχοντα, καὶ κλείσῃ τὰ σπλάγχχνα αὐτοῦ ἀπ'
 αὐτοῦ, πῶς ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ μένει ἐν αὐτῷ; τεκνία 18
 μου, μὴ ἀγαπῶμεν λόγῳ μὴδὲ τῇ γλώσσῃ, ἀλλ' ἔργῳ
 καὶ ἀληθείᾳ. Καὶ ἐν τούτῳ γνωσόμεθα ὅτι ἐκ τῆς 19
 ἀληθείας ἐσμέν, καὶ ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ πείσομεν τὰς

wolf, to give the sheep, who would otherwise have been killed, the chance of escape.

καὶ . . . τιθέναι] We ought to imitate our Saviour's love in kind, in our love being practical; and in degree, in our love being unbounded. Cf. Rom. xvi. 4.

17. ὅς δ' ἂν . . . ἐν αὐτῷ] An illustration, and possibly *ad hominem*, of the practical nature of the brotherly love he is speaking of, in its application to everyday life. ὅς δ' ἂν = ἐάν τις (Gr. 828. obs. 1). δέ is continuative, introducing the application as following from the foregoing thought.

ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ] is either, 'love towards God,' or, which is more in harmony with the context, 'the love of God,' which is the indwelling principle of the spiritual life.

μένει] too rather points to this latter meaning.

18. τεκνία . . . ἀληθείᾳ] A further personal application of the preceding.

λόγῳ μὴδὲ τῇ γλώσσῃ] Huther makes γλώσσῃ merely an explanation of λόγῳ, to signify that by ἀγαπᾶν λόγῳ merely the verbal expression of love is meant; but this seems fanciful and needless. It would seem better (remarking that it is not λόγοις but λόγῳ) to take it as signifying theory as opposed to practice (ἔργῳ); and μὴδὲ τῇ γλώσσῃ words as

opposed to realities (ἀληθείᾳ). Cf. Theognis, 979: 'μή μοι ἀνὴρ εἴη γλώσσῃ φίλος ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔργῳ.'

τῇ γλώσσῃ] The article marks the tongue as the organ of pretended love. Huther thinks that ἀληθείᾳ is added to ἔργῳ to mark that practical love is the only true love; but this confusion of the two notions misses the force of the expression and of the antithesis to λόγος and γλώσσῃ. Cf. Jas. ii. 15, 16.

19. καὶ ἐν τούτῳ . . . ἡμῶν] Another motive to practical love is that it is the ground and test of assurance. ἐν τούτῳ = ἀγαπᾶν ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ.

γνωσόμεθα] = μελλόμεν γινώσκειν (Gr. 406. 5).

ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας] ἐκ marks the origin, or rather that on which we depend and belong to as clients. τῆς ἀληθείας, the truth itself, i.e. the Gospel truth. Huther: 'Die Liebe ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ist das Zeugniß der Geburt ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας.'

ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ] Not in the day of judgment, but as each Christian feels himself ever in God's sight. The deceitfulness of the heart (above all things) makes the double witness necessary.

πείσομεν] Huther says πείθειν in its proper force may have either of two meanings: to persuade the mind (1) to believe something, or (2) to do something. But it is difficult to find

20 καρδίας ἡμῶν· ὅτι ἐὰν καταγινώσκη ἡμῶν ἡ καρδία,
ὅτι μείζων ἐστὶν ὁ Θεὸς τῆς καρδίας ἡμῶν, καὶ

anything in the context which the heart is to be persuaded to believe. If we take the second, we may from the general bearing of the context supply active deeds of love as the result of the persuasion. But neither does this suit the context, for this practical love is the agent of *πεῖθειν*, and not the result of it. The general interpretation is that of 'appeasing or quieting' our hearts to make them cease accusing us. This is correct as far as it goes, but the real force of the passage is developed by giving *πεῖθειν* its rhetorical sense of a pleader prevailing with the judges; and this sense is suggested and confirmed by *καταγινώσκη*, which has also a rhetorical or forensic force, of either deciding against a person or forming an opinion adverse to him. We then may be able thus to represent the process. A Christian's heart burdened with a sense of its own weakness and unworthiness forms an unfavourable opinion of the state of the soul, pronounces against its salvation. If we are conscious of practically loving the brethren, we can adduce this as evidence of the contrary, and give the heart ground to change its opinion, and to reassure itself. Anyone who has had experience of the doubts and fears which spring up in a believer's heart from time to time of whether he is or is not in a state of condemnation will feel the need and the efficacy of this test of faith and means of reassurance. It is the same notion as that of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, '*The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God*;' except that in this our own

spirit is represented as in a state of confidence; while St. John represents our spirit as doubting and accusing until persuaded by the evidence which the presence of practical love on his daily life gives of his being a child of God, or in other words having the Spirit of God.

20. *ὅτι ἐὰν . . . ἡ καρδία*] A difficulty arises from the repetition of *ὅτι* in the next clause. Stephens proposes to change the first *ὅτι* into *ἐτι*. Others change *ὅτι ἐὰν* into *ὅτε ἂν* for *ὅταν*; others explain the second *ὅτι* by *δηλόνοσι*, *perfecto*; others supply some sentence between *ὅτι* and *ἐὰν*, because we ought to know our heart, &c., that, &c. All of which only mark the difficulty of the passage. We may take the second *ὅτι* as an emphatic repetition of the first, occasioned by the intervening clause (Gr. 804. 3); but the most satisfactory way is to take *ὅτι ἐὰν* for *ὅτι ἂν*. *ἐὰν* for *ἂν* is in many passages an indisputable reading; and we find the combination *ὅτι ἂν* in John ii. 5; xiv. 13; xv. 16. It need hardly be said that *καταγινώσκειν* takes an accusative of that which a man lays to the charge of another. This clause then belongs to what goes before. 'We shall be able to convince our hearts, if in anything they are disposed to convict us.' And then the next clause gives a conclusive reason why this should be.

ὅτι μείζων . . . πάντα] God is greater than us, particularly in that He knows all things. So that if God by the presence of His Spirit within us, as shown by an active life of love, witnesses that we are children of

γινώσκει πάντα. ἀγαπητοί, ἐὰν ἡ καρδιά ἡμῶν μὴ 21
καταγινώσκη ἡμῶν, παρρησίαν ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν
Θεόν, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν αἰτῶμεν, λαμβάνομεν παρ' αὐτοῦ, 22
ὅτι τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τηροῦμεν, καὶ τὰ ἀρεστὰ

God, we may trust to Him in spite of the misgivings or accusations of our hearts. It is a matter of everyday spiritual experience that doubts rise up in the hearts of even faithful Christians as to their salvation. A life of practical love is the answer given by God's Spirit to reassure such a one.

ὅτι μέλλων] The indefinite notion of μέλλων must be defined by the context, and here it is defined by the clause καὶ γινώσκει πάντα. This is the particular point in which the Divine superiority is exhibited here.

21. ἀγαπητοὶ . . . αὐτοῦ] He now proceeds to a fresh blessing arising from brotherly love. If we succeed in this by the aid of God's Spirit bearing witness against our spirit, persuading our hearts so that they no longer condemn us, we have that παρρησία, that undoubting and unwavering confidence and assurance towards God that makes our prayers effectual; we have that faith in our spiritual state, that loving confidence in God, which makes prayer prevailing.

παρρησίαν] is properly *liberty of speech*. We have the right and the power of telling God in prayer all that we feel or wish for, unreservedly. There is nothing between us and God—nothing to hinder us. So παρρησίαν λέγειν is to speak openly, without reserve or hesitation. Cf. Acts iv. 13: τὴν τοῦ Πέτροῦ παρρησίαν, the bold unreserved speech of Peter. Then it means that *confidence* which lies at the bottom of such unreserve, Heb. x. 35: μὴ ἀποβάλλετε τὴν παρ-

ρησίαν ὑμῶν. But here the context seems to refer it to unreserved prayer.

πρὸς (Gr. 638. III. 3. c.).

22. καὶ ὃ ἐὰν . . . αὐτοῦ] καὶ seems to be epexegetic, explaining the nature of this παρρησία. We are confident and unreserved because we know that what we ask He will give us.

παρ' αὐτοῦ] = Θεοῦ. It is not necessary to supply any definite explanation or limitation of this clause, such as if we ask anything rightly. It is implied in the notion itself; even in such παρρησία all the requests of the Christian '*naturâ rei*' subordinate themselves to the will of God; after the pattern of our Saviour, '*Father, if Thou be willing*' is implied if not expressed. The matter will be treated of more at length in chap. v. 15.

ὅτι τὰς . . . ποιοῦμεν] This may be taken as the reason why God gives us what we ask for, or as the ground of our confidence that He will do so. The latter is the best, as in the former the answer to prayer which is the result of the free love of God is represented as the result of our works and deservings.

τὰς ἐντολὰς] refers possibly rather to the positive side of our duty towards God, and doing what He commands us; ἀρεστὰ rather to works of piety. The widow's mite would be an instance of the latter. The two verbs τηρεῖν and ποιεῖν support this notion, or the two express the same actions, the one naming them as obedience, the other as love.

- 23 ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ποιούμεν. καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἐντολὴ αὐτοῦ, ἵνα πιστεύσωμεν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους, καθὼς
- 24 ἔδωκεν ἐντολὴν ἡμῖν. καὶ ὁ τηρῶν τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ, ἐν αὐτῷ μένει, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν αὐτῷ. καὶ ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι μένει ἐν ἡμῖν, ἐκ τοῦ Πνεύματος οὗ ἡμῖν ἔδωκεν.

23. αὕτη . . . ἡμῖν] The two points of Christian duty, faith and practice.

αὕτη] is attracted to ἐντολὴ (Gr. 657. 2. b.).

ἵνα] gives the nature and contents of the ἐντολή, not the aim (Gr. 803. 3. obs. 1).

πιστεύσωμεν τῷ ὀνόματι, elsewhere εἰς τὸ ὄνομα] The dative signifies the trusting character of the πίστις; εἰς rather the adherence to the Christian profession; though where two forms are so nearly identical, it is perhaps hypercriticism to draw such possibly only fanciful distinctions.

What is meant by πιστεύειν τῷ ὀνόματι or εἰς τὸ ὄνομα? To believe in the name of Christ is to believe in that which His name signifies. Nor is it necessarily confined to the name 'Jesus Christ,' that would rather have been Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, but it applies to what God has revealed of His Son, of His nature, character, mission, by the various names by which He has revealed Him; and thus it would include a complete faith in Christ and His Gospel as exhibited in His various functions belonging to and expressed by His various names.

καὶ ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους] As πιστεύειν τῷ ὀνόματι expresses the intellectual state of the Christian, so ἀγαπῶμεν τοὺς ἀλλήλους expresses his moral or practical state. καὶ is not

merely explanatory, giving the nature of the πίστις, but copulative, attaching the practical to the intellectual.

καθὼς . . . ἡμῖν] The ἐντολή may include both the πίστις and the ἀγάπη, or only ἀγάπη. This is the best, as it lays further emphasis on the leading notion of the chapter.

διδόναι ἐντολήν = ἐνετελεῖν] The singular number is the proper one for such a compound expression.

24. ὁ τηρῶν τὰς ἐντολὰς . . . αὐτῷ] The plural is possibly used to signify the multiform and multifold nature of God's will for us, and that all are comprehended, or it may refer definitely to ἀγάπη and πίστις.

St. John concludes the chapter with that which has been the key-note of it all—the practical character of the Christian's fellowship with God, and the practical character of the test whereby a Christian may judge of his state.

ἐν τούτῳ . . . ἔδωκεν] The presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts working in us effectually to the keeping of His commandments, is a sure test of our being in fellowship with God, even should our hearts, as in v. 20, be inclined to view it unfavourably.

ἐκ] (Gr. 621. 3. c.) signifying the source whence the knowledge proceeds.

οὗ] is not partitive, but the simple attraction of the relative.

IV. The apostle again warns his

ἌΓΑΠΗΤΟΙ, μὴ παντὶ πνεύματι πιστεύετε, ἀλλὰ **ΙΥ**. δοκιμάζετε τὰ πνεύματα, εἰ ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστίν· ὅτι πολλοὶ ψευδοπροφήται ἐξεληλύθασιν εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

disciples against false teachers, who were introducing notions contrary to what Christ had revealed and the Apostles taught in the Church.

He had in the last verse of chap. iii. spoken of the gift of the Spirit as the assurance of our abiding in God, and he now so far limits this as to say that those which claimed to have the Spirit by reason of the exercise of miraculous powers, were not all to be accepted without enquiry, nor trusted to as sound teachers.

Ι. μὴ παντὶ πνεύματι πιστεύετε] Some take this to be equivalent to *παντὶ τῷ λαλοῦντι ἐν πνεύματι*, and to mean simply false teachers who pretended to speak in the Spirit, that is, to be empowered by the Spirit to teach; and this would give a sufficiently good sense, and express with sufficient accuracy the apostle's warning; but it would not, I think, give the exact notion of *πνεύματι*. There is a distinct intimation given by our Lord in Matt. xxiv. 24 that false prophets would be able to work signs and wonders as well as the true teachers, and the same notion is recognised by St. Paul in 2 Thess. ii. 9; so that there is no reason, but rather the contrary, why there should not have been persons actually possessing the power of working miracles, who were, though permitted by God, yet not from Him or of Him. These would be called *πνεύματα*, as the power whereby they were worked was outwardly, and claimed to be essentially, the same as that whereby Apostolic miracles were worked, the *τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ*. The way in which workers of miracles would be

spoken of would be as *ἔχοντες τὸ πνεῦμα*, and the power whereby they worked would be called *πνεύματα*. St. John is simply warning the disciples not to trust every such exhibition of power as arguing the presence and sanction of the Spirit of God, but to test them. As to the continuance of these miracles worked by a power other than that of God, it may suffice to say that it is most reasonable to suppose that they would cease when miraculous powers ceased in the Church. The important thing to bear in mind is, that even supposing miracles in the present day to be real, that they are to be tested by doctrines existing from the beginning in the Church, and cannot be made the authority for any fresh revelation of novelties unknown to the Apostles. This is evidently the very point against which St. John is warning the Church.

δοκιμάζετε] Hence we see that the enquiry and of course the decision in such points belongs to individuals, or at the utmost to the whole Church, and not to a single individual such as the pope. But the application to individuals is most in harmony with the context and with common sense. **ἐκ]** 'proceed from God,' not merely 'are of God.'

ὅτι κ.τ.λ.] gives the reason why it is necessary thus to prove them. **ψευδοπροφήται]** Cf. ii. 18. **ἐξεληλύθασιν**, have appeared openly. There does not seem to be any allusion here to those (ii. 19) who had left the Church, but simply to certain teachers in the Church, who pretended that their false teaching came from God

2 ἐν τούτῳ γινώσχετε τὸ Πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ· πᾶν πνεῦμα
ὃ ὁμολογεῖ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα,

εἰς τὸν κόσμον, cf. John vi. 14; x. 36.

2. ἐν τούτῳ . . . ἐστὶ] The mark whereby the true prophet is to be discerned from the false one is by the doctrine he taught.

ἐν τούτῳ] refers to what follows.

γινώσχετε] may be either indicative present or imperative. The former is the better.

We may see from hence how little in accordance with Apostolic teaching is the modern notion that we cannot distinguish between truth and falsehood with sufficient certainty to say that this or that doctrine is false, even though we hold the contrary to be true. It is true that we cannot, generally speaking, so demonstrate the truth of any doctrine as to satisfy and persuade those who deny it; but this does not prevent our being able, for our own guidance and that of others, to assert absolutely that such and such doctrines are true, and such and such doctrines are false. So much at least is clear from the apostle's here desiring his readers to use a particular point of doctrine as a test of a teacher being or not being in error. Of course if it had been impossible to say absolutely that this doctrine was objectively true it could not have been a test of the subjective truth of the teacher. We are to form a definite judgment on doctrines and use them as tests. Again, it shows the fallacy of the notion that it is immaterial what a man believes. Everyone's belief must be true or the contrary, even in points on which Scripture speaks most mysteriously. Two seemingly, or humanly speaking, opposed doctrines may both be true, but he who denies either of them is

so far in error, and may be thought and spoken of as such, if need be.

τὸ Πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ] The Spirit of God, as distinct from other *soi-disant* spirits of prophecy, or the presence of the Spirit of God.

Χριστὸν . . . ἐληλυθότα] The test of exhibitions of seemingly Divine power was to be truth of doctrine, and this more particularly in that point which was in the Church of that time the most important error; the want of belief in which implied the absence of that faith in Christ and the Gospel scheme, without which a man would have received Christianity only in name. We are not to suppose that there are no other cardinal points of doctrine (because in other passages of Scripture other such points are given), but this was the point in which heresy was then disturbing the peace of the Church and attacking the faith of individuals. The same principle *mutatis mutandis* may be applied to other points of heresy which in other ages have played the same part in the warfare of the world against Christ. I do not think it can be reasonably said that this heresy contains and implies in itself all heresies, for manifestly it does not; but it betrays and implies a general spirit of disbelief and rationalism, which was called forth on that particular point in the then circumstances of the Church, as well as disbelief in a particular point of vital importance to the faith of the Church as well as to that of individuals. For the same reasons we argue that freedom from this heresy does not imply freedom from others; nor does the passage

ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστι. καὶ πᾶν πνεῦμα ὃ μὴ ὁμολογεῖ 3

mean that this is the only error which breaks off a man from Christian fellowship, or that if a man is right in this, the rest does not matter. In the several ages of the Church there have been points other than this—in each age a peculiar false teaching: and in the several ages a right belief on this point was the great test of a man's being in possession of Divine truth. There is, I suppose, scarcely a point of Christian doctrine which has not in one age or other been denied and assailed, but the whole body of the truth has in the ages, viewed as a whole, remained firm and established. Heresies are perishable; truth is imperishable. Take any truth which has been assailed in some one age; it has stood unchallenged in other ages, and thus the witness of the whole, as a whole, is in its favour. In the next age another truth has been attacked, but it too in the other ages has been unassailed. The most successful heresies have been successful only during a portion of the Church's existence. The several truths have stood unquestioned except in the particular age in which they were assailed; and, therefore, the several heresies affect in a very small degree, if at all, the witness of the Church in favour of all and each of the facts of Christian truth.

The ways of taking this passage are: (a) to join *Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν*, and take *ἐληλυθότα* as an infinitive, 'confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh;' or as the participle, 'confesses Jesus Christ as come in the flesh.' These two are very much the same, and differ only grammatically. (b) To make *Ἰησοῦν* the subject, *Χριστόν* the predicate, and *ἐληλυθότα* κ.τ.λ. as the remote attributive in

apposition='confesses that Jesus is the Christ come in the flesh.' In (a) we suppose St. John to be alluding only to that form of 'Doketismus' which held Jesus Christ to be a mere phantom, the emphasis resting on *ἐν σαρκί*. In (b) we suppose St. John to allude to another form of 'Doketismus,' which made Jesus and Christ two separate beings—and the passage ii. 22 makes it possible that this was the heresy at which St. John was aiming; and again, the use of *Ἰησοῦν* in v. 3 without *Χριστόν* has a similar bearing. The substantial heresy was the denial of the actual and divine mission of the man Jesus.

The interpretations which ignore the heresy are forced and untenable. Socinus makes the participle signify *although*, which would require *πέρ*. Grotius merely makes *ἐν σαρκί* mean *a humble state*, which betrays its own confutation.

That the apostle is not speaking of heathen unbelievers we see from chap. ii. 22, where these false prophets are spoken of as having once belonged to the Church. We may further observe that if in the early Church Christ had been viewed as a mere man, the Docetic heresy could not have existed, for His existence on earth as a mere man was a mere question of fact, denied by no one. What was assailed, mostly by explanations, was the fact asserted in the Church that the Son of God had appeared on earth in human shape.

ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκ is not merely belonging to God, 'divine,' but 'proceeding from God.'

3. ὃ μὴ ὁμολογεῖ] *μή* is used either as referring to the mental persuasion which the clause expresses, or more probably as marking the

τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐκ ἔστι· καὶ τοῦτό
 ἔστι τὸ τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου, ὃ ἀκηκόατε ὅτι ἔρχεται,
 4 καὶ νῦν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐστὶν ἡδη. Ὑμεῖς ἐκ
 τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστε, τέκνία, καὶ νενικήκατε αὐτούς·
 5 ὅτι μείζων ἐστὶν ὁ ἐν ὑμῖν ἢ ὁ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. Αὐτοὶ
 ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου εἰσὶ· διὰ τοῦτο ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου

logical bearing of the relative clause on the principal. It is not merely a *defining* characteristic of the false spirit, but it expresses disbelief in Christ as the reason why the false spirit is to be rejected (Gr. 742. 2).

μη ὁμολογεῖ] Another reading seems to have been λυει (Socrat. vii. 32; Irenæus iii. 17. Tertullian Adv. Marc. v. 16; Adv. Psychic. 1* seems also to recognise it). It probably arose from the polemical writings in which those who denied our Lord's advent as Christ in the flesh were said λυειν τὸν Ἰησοῦν.

τὸν Ἰησοῦν] The article = *this Jesus* of whom I am speaking.

ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐκ ἔστι] Virtually equals ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου ἔστι.

καὶ τοῦτο . . . ἀντιχρίστου] It is not necessary or desirable to supply πνεῦμα. τὸ τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου is the essence or principle of Antichrist, the αὐτό Antichrist (Gr. 436. 2. *δ.* 5). Cf. Matt. xxi. 21; 1 Cor. x. 24; James iv. 14; 2 Pet. ii. 22.

ὃ ἀκηκόατε] Cf. chap. ii. 18. The neuter relative, as well as the form to which it refers, marks that St. John had no definite person in his eye, but the general spirit which possessed several false teachers.

ὅτι ἔρχεται] is in the direct form to give emphasis (Gr. 886. 2).

ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ] No longer merely in the invisible world of spiritual wickedness, but actually in the visible

state of things on earth.

4. ὑμεῖς . . . ἀκούει] The apostle now gives the relation in which the faithful stand to these false teachers, and consequently how they are to bear themselves towards them, as belonging to a totally different state of things, and a totally different sphere of action.

νενικήκατε] have withstood their attempts to seduce you from the truth.

ὅτι . . . κόσμῳ] The secret of this victory over false teachers does not lie in the strength and faithfulness of the believer, but in the presence and might of Him in Whom they believe, and Who by their faith dwells in them.

ὁ ἐν ὑμῖν] God, as they ἐκ Θεοῦ, so God is ἐν αὐτοῖς, or it may be Christ. ὁ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ] i.e. ὁ διάβολος, whose children the false prophets are.

ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ] Not merely in the false-teachers, but in that whole system to which the false teachers belong.

5. Αὐτοὶ . . . ἀκούει] The difference between the sphere in which the false teachers move and that of the Christian accounts for and enforces the essential difference between their teaching and that of the Church. The false prophets belong to the heathen world, and consequently view things from the heathen point, and

* Or 'De Jejunis,' as this treatise is more commonly called.

λαλοῦσι, καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτῶν ἀκούει. ἡμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ 6
 Θεοῦ ἐσμεν· ὁ γινώσκων τὸν Θεόν, ἀκούει ἡμῶν· ὅς
 οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὐκ ἀκούει ἡμῶν. Ἐκ τούτου
 γινώσκουμεν τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα
 τῆς πλάνης. Ἀγαπητοί, ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους· ὅτι 7

put forth heathen principles for belief and conduct; mere principles of reason, such as even in the hands of heathen philosophy were false and meagre, and in the practical world were simply evil views and evil habits acknowledged and acted upon. The world naturally receives and approves the principles they set forth, and would probably receive Christianity as a mere human scheme of religious belief and practice if it were what they would have it to be.

6. ἡμεῖς . . . οὐκ ἀκούει ἡμῶν] The true teachers of the Gospel live in another sphere and belong to another state of things. We move in and belong to a divine and not a mere heathen state of things. We view things in a spiritual light, not merely what the reason of the world teaches and recognises, but what has been revealed by God. And as he who lives in the system of the world, and whose knowledge is confined to worldly views of things, receives the teaching of these false teachers, so he whose knowledge is of a different sort, who knows what God is, and consequently what man really is, he recognises and receives our teaching.

ἐκ τούτου] sc. from what follows. We can distinguish the false teachers from the true ones by this. The world receives the one, it does not receive the other. This is eminently true of those heresies which deny our Saviour's Divinity. If in a proposed revelation there was nothing above human reason, no mysteries

that is, if reason could assent not merely to the sufficiency of the evidence in its favour, but to the reasonableness of the matter proposed, this would be in itself an evidence against such a system. We thus find in St. John the argument that if there were no mysteries in revelation, so that it recommended itself to human reason, this would be an argument against it. τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας] This may be either: (α) the adjectival genitive, the true Spirit (Gr. 542. 5. obs. 3); or (β) the genitive of reference, the Spirit working in truth (Gr. 542. 5. ii. β. α.); or (γ) characterised by truth (Gr. 542. 5. viii. β.); or (δ) as leading to truth (Gr. 542. 5. ii. c. 4). Of these (α) and (γ) are the best.

7. From the rapid transition from this false teaching to the exhortation to brotherly love, it would seem as if this false teaching put forward selfishness and self-interest as the proper motive and guide for human action, instead of brotherly love. This would be quite consistent with what the apostle says above about these false teachers putting forth worldly principles. Mere worldly wisdom makes reason the rule of belief, and selfishness or self-love with regard to this world only the rule of practice. ἀλλήλους] refers to the Christian brotherhood rather than to mankind in general. General philanthropy is a doctrine of Christian morality, provided that it be not so insisted upon as to make men swam and lose sight

ἡ ἀγάπη ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστὶ, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν, ἐκ τοῦ
8 Θεοῦ γεγέννηται, καὶ γινώσκει τὸν Θεόν· ὁ μὴ ἀγα-
πῶν, οὐκ ἔγνω τὸν Θεόν· ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν.

of the more close and real relations of Christian fellowship. So neither does patriotism exclude philanthropy, provided that a man does not lose sight of love of his country in an abstract and, for the most part, unreal and unpractical love of the whole race.

ὅτι . . . τὸν Θεόν] The Christians, who are the children of God, are especially bound to that which flows from God Himself.

ἡ ἀγάπη] love in its widest sense.

πᾶς . . . γεγέννηται] As love thus flows from God, it follows that in everyone who is possessed of this attribute it must have been put in him by God Himself. It must have been part of God's creation. We may observe that the love here spoken of is not limited to the love between Christians, who are more especially, and in other points also, born of God, but it is 'every one.' If love existed in a heathen, it was part of God's original creation, wherein man was created in God's image. Even heathen virtues flow from and are the gift and creation of God. There is no reason why we should not receive this, or view it as incompatible with the notion of the higher re-creation of the Christian, in which also love forms an important, if not the most important, element.

καὶ γινώσκει τὸν Θεόν] As far as any one is born of God, and possesses one of the Divine attributes, he knows God experimentally. Love, *ipso facto*, gives him, as far as it exists, an instinctive knowledge of what God is, though he may not be able to

express it in words or even realise it in thought, inasmuch as love is God.

8. ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν . . . Θεόν] There is no reason why this should be limited to the Christian. He to whose heart love is a stranger is not only, as all men are by nature, at enmity with God, but is utterly ignorant of Him. He has never had any knowledge of God, for it is impossible that love should be utterly extinguished where it has once been lit. The man whose principle of thought, feeling, and action is sheer unmixed selfishness, who is uninfluenced by love of God or love of others, is little removed from the animal creation, who, of course, have no idea or notion of God. As an instance of such a being one might take some of the African kings described by Sir Samuel Baker, or some of the Shahs of Persia. The apostle seems here to be setting forth the divine nature and excellence of love in general, rather than stating any peculiar privileges of Christians, so he immediately applies what he has been saying to the particular love which Christians ought to have towards each other, but which, though differing both in kind and degree from love in general, yet so far falls under it that what is said to recommend and exalt the latter may be likewise said with greater force of the former.

ὅτι ὁ . . . ἐστίν] Love is not merely one of the attributes of God, but rather His whole nature and being, as far as we can conceive of it. ἀγάπη without ἡ, love in the abstract.

Ἐν τούτῳ ἐφανερώθη ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν, ὅτι 9
 τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ ἀπέσταλκεν ὁ Θεὸς εἰς
 τὸν κόσμον, ἵνα ζήσωμεν δι' αὐτοῦ. ἐν τούτῳ ἐστὶν 10
 ἡ ἀγάπη, οὐχ ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἠγαπήσαμεν τὸν Θεόν, ἀλλ'
 ὅτι αὐτὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς, καὶ ἀπέστειλε τὸν υἱὸν
 αὐτοῦ ἰλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. ἀγαπητοί, 11

9. ἐν τούτῳ . . . δι' αὐτοῦ] ἐν τούτῳ refers to what follows. The apostle here gives God's love as it presents itself to man. The way in which this love is manifested is in itself a reason why we should love one another; why, if we are Christians, we *must* love one another.

ἐν ἡμῖν] means *to us* (Gr. 622. 3. c.). Mankind is the sphere in which the love works. These words may be either joined to ἐφανερώθη or ἀγάπη. The omission of the article in such appositions is not unusual (Gr. 467. obs. 2). εἰς ἡμᾶς would express the aim and object towards; ἐν, the actual operation of the love in a definite sphere.

ἵνα ζήσωμεν] either *live spiritually*, or, which is better, *escape death*. This is the notion which in John. iii. 16, 17 is attached to the sending of the Son into the world.

μονογενῆ] heightens the notion of God's love, looked at from a human point of view.

10. ἐν τούτῳ . . . Θεόν] ἐν τούτῳ refers to what follows. The love here spoken of is more really and truly conceived of when we think not of our loving God, but of His loving us. Love has its origin not in man or human nature, but in God and the Divine nature. It is not first or chiefly an attribute of human nature or human excellence, the object of which is God, whereby we do God honour and service, and whereby He

is moved to love us in return; but the truest and highest conception of love is as existing prior to human love, and exhibited toward us, so that by it we are moved to love God. This then being the most perfect type of love, human love must be cast in this mould; and as God's love has exhibited itself chiefly in love towards those whom He has redeemed by His Son, so must our love be directed towards and exhibit itself in the same objects. Hence the love of man towards man—the love which loves only those in whom it is interested—is not to be the type of Christian love, but the Divine love towards the redeemed (cf. ii. 3. note). The aorists ἠγαπήσαμεν, ἠγαπήσεν, ἀπέστειλεν are historic aorists, referring to the past instances of God's love to us rather than to its present bearing on us; while ἀπέσταλκε in v. 9 expresses the continued and permanent effect of God's past act of love.

ἰλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν] see ch. ii. 2.

11. ἀγαπητοί . . . ἀγαπᾶν] This is the conclusion which we have just given above, arising 1st, absolutely from the type of Divine love; 2nd, practically from our gratitude to God prompting us to love those whom He has loved as He loved them.

εἰ] with indicative, *since*.

καί] 'We too;' after this example.

- εἰ οὕτως ὁ Θεὸς ἡγάπησεν ἡμᾶς, καὶ ἡμεῖς ὀφείλομεν
 12 ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν. Θεὸν οὐδέις πώποτε τεθέαται·
 εἰ ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους, ὁ Θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν μένει, καὶ ἡ
 13 ἀγάπη αὐτοῦ τετελειωμένη ἐστὶν ἐν ἡμῖν. ἐν τούτῳ
 γινώσκουμεν ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ μένομεν, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν ἡμῖν,

12. Θεὸν . . . τεθέαται] The same statement occurs in John i. 18. We cannot hold actual visible communion with God face to face. Our communion with Him is spiritual, through His dwelling in our hearts, occupying our thoughts, affections, and desires.

εἰ ἀγαπῶμεν . . . μένει] This He does if we love one another, for this love is the fulfilling of the moral law of God, the keeping His commandments; and if we keep His commandments, He has told us that He will dwell in us (John xiv. 23).

καὶ ἡ . . . ἡμῖν] Either the love which we have for God, or the love which He has for us has received its full perfection and completion. Either of these in its perfect development comprehends and implies the other. They are only different expressions for the same moral and spiritual state. ἡ ἀγάπη αὐτοῦ (τοῦ Θεοῦ), the love which God showed to us is developed to its proper end and functions when it creates in us love towards each other. If we love the brethren our love toward God is confirmed, developed, perfected, because it is an evidence that God, by His Spirit, is in us in power. The more we feel that we love God, the more we shall love them, if that feeling be true.

13. ἐν τούτῳ . . . ἡμῖν] This may express the way in which this love is perfected. Our power of loving the brethren proves that we have the Spirit, that God is abiding

in us; so that we cannot help feeling His love more sensibly, and loving Him more fervently.

ἐν αὐτῷ . . . ἐν ἡμῖν] The two signify the close reciprocal connection between God and the believer.

ὅτι . . . ἡμῖν] The test and witness is here clearly laid down. Our possession of the gift of the Spirit is the foundation of our knowledge on this point, as our knowledge must be of our assurance. The Spirit is the Spirit of *truth* and of *holiness*, and, in primitive times, the *Spirit of miracles*, &c. The question is—how the Spirit shows itself. One way must be by the fruits thereof, and these we have given us in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, in the list of the Christian graces. Wherefore the possession and practice of the Christian graces must be the foundation of this assurance. Another point wherein the possession of the Spirit of truth shows itself is a right belief in Christ as revealed in the Gospel, and in God as revealed by Christ.

ἐκ τοῦ Πνεύματος] either a portion of His Spirit, or from the rich treasure of His Spirit. We do not, properly speaking, receive the gifts of the Spirit, but the Spirit Himself. What we call the *gifts* of the Spirit are in reality the Spirit working in us. ἐκ τοῦ Πνεύματος might signify the difference of the way in which the Spirit of miracles worked. It is the same Spirit, but to one He worked in one way, to another in another; or, popularly speaking, one gift would be

ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ Πνεύματος αὐτοῦ δέδωκεν ἡμῖν. Καὶ 14
 ἡμεῖς τεθεάμεθα, καὶ μαρτυροῦμεν ὅτι ὁ Πατὴρ
 ἀπέσταλκε τὸν υἱὸν σωτῆρα τοῦ κόσμου. ὃς ἂν 15
 ὁμολογήσῃ ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ
 Θεὸς ἐν αὐτῷ μένει, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ Θεῷ. Καὶ 16
 ἡμεῖς ἐγνώκαμεν καὶ πεπιστεύκαμεν τὴν ἀγάπην ἣν

given to one person, another to another.

14. St. John now for a moment recurs to that which he had before spoken of as the source and foundation of Christian love, the source whence it springs, the foundation on which it is built, viz. the love of God in sending His Son as a propitiation for our sins. He now puts before his readers his personal and ocular evidence of the certainty of this doctrine in order to confirm them in it, and to show the importance of a true belief as the sound foundation for practice. καὶ ἡμεῖς] himself and the other apostles.

τεθεάμεθα] not by mere hearsay or at second hand, but as by an ocular witness. They saw our Lord in the actual exercise of His mission from His Father, and they saw the signs and proofs of His being sent by His Father.

σωτῆρα] has here a predicative force (Gr. 375. 6), or it may be simply in apposition, as the Saviour, or more definitely *to be*, expressing the object.

τοῦ κόσμου] not of any limited portion of it. See Mr. Jelf's Bampton Lectures (1857), pp. 102-104.

15. ὃς ἂν . . . Θεῷ] This belief that Christ is the Son of God must be essentially the same as that given in v. 3, that Jesus is Christ come in the flesh; so that this interprets the former one. Both intimate a belief in the Divine nature and Divine mission

of Jesus, as preached by the Apostles, and for the reason why this point is brought prominently forward see under v. 3. We may observe how St. John again brings emphatically before us the reciprocal character of our union with God.

16. καὶ . . . ἡμῖν] This gives the reason why the mission of Christ has been just again introduced. The fact of Christ's mission and of our recognition of it is the source of this love. We see the apostle not only brings forward the doctrine of Christ's mission, but also the bearing it has on the heart as the evidence of God's love to us.

ἐγνώκαμεν καὶ πεπιστεύκαμεν] There is a difference between *γνώσις* and *πίστις*. *πίστις* is *γνώσις* accepted morally, spreading through the reason, desires, affections of the natural man: in John vi. 69 it is *πεπιστεύκαμεν καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν*. In the true Christian they are only the same thing differently viewed. We have received the truth both in the intellectual and moral nature, or we have it in our moral and intellectual nature. The *ὁμολογήσαμεν ὅτι Χριστὸς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ* is *πίστις*. Nothing could more clearly show that faith and love go hand in hand and imply each other. Love is not Christian love unless it springs from faith. Knowledge is not faith. Faith is not lively faith unless love springs from it. ἐν ἡμῖν] as in v. 9.

ὁ Θεός . . . ἐστὶ] To heighten our

ἔχει ὁ Θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν. ὁ Θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστὶ, καὶ ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ, ἐν τῷ Θεῷ μένει, καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ἐν αὐτῷ.

17 Ἐν τούτῳ τετελείωται ἡ ἀγάπη μεθ' ἡμῶν, ἵνα παρρησίαν ἔχωμεν ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς κρίσεως, ὅτι

notion of God's love, and thus to increase our faith and quicken our love, he again speaks of love as being the essential nature of God. This love is to be taken in its widest sense; love in the abstract. That this does not exclude other attributes, such as justice, we know from such expressions as 'God is just;' but all these attributes are subordinated to love, if one may speak thus of Him without presumption or irreverence. This subordination of justice (for instance) to love is clearly shown in the scheme of salvation through Christ.

καὶ ὁ μένων . . . αὐτῷ] He in whose heart love is habitually the principle of thought and action abides in God—inasmuch as the Divine nature has assimilated and absorbed his nature to itself—and God in him, inasmuch as the Divine nature dwells and works in his. The latter notion is easily comprehended, the former is less easy.

17. ἐν τούτῳ . . . τούτῳ] St. John had in v. 12 given the condition (ἐὰν ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους) and the essence of perfect love (ὁ Θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν μένει). He now further develops and explains its nature by its result and privileges (ἵνα παρρησίαν κ.τ.λ.), and gives the ground thereof (ὅτι κ.τ.λ.), showing that practical conformity to Him Who loved us is the ground of the most precious of the Christian's privileges.

ἐν τούτῳ] may refer either to the crowning results of ἀγάπη (ἵνα κ.τ.λ.)

or to the ground on which these results rest (ὅτι κ.τ.λ.). Either the crowning perfection and development of this love is our having boldness in the day of judgment; or this love receives this its crowning perfection by our being assimilated in this world to Him.

ἡ ἀγάπη] This love of which we have been speaking; *not the love which God has to us*, as some interpret it, taking μεθ' ἡμῶν = εἰς ἡμᾶς, but *the love (of God) dwelling in us*, μετὰ retaining its proper sense. The love which is spoken of in vv. 16 and 18 is a love in man, not towards man. It is the same which is spoken of here. In v. 12 the love which God showed to us is spoken of as being fully developed and performing its functions in us (ἐν ἡμῖν) when brotherly love springs up from it. Here the principle of love thus created is spoken of as receiving its perfect development in the day of judgment by giving us boldness.

τετελείωται] *receives its perfect development, or attains its proper end.* τετελειωμένη ἐστίν is in v. 12 a *state of perfect development.* As the two are coincident, it does not signify which we take for the expression of both.

μεθ' ἡμῶν] belongs either to τετελείωται or to ἡ ἀγάπη. The latter is the best, as defining the love more accurately, and more in harmony with the context; love springing from God, *dwelling in us and abiding with us*, as the internal principle of spiritual life.

καθὼς ἐκεῖνός ἐστι, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ
τούτῳ. φόβος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ, ἀλλ' ἡ τελεία 18
ἀγάπη ἔξω βάλλει τὸν φόβον, ὅτι ὁ φόβος κόλασιν

ἵνα ἔχωμεν] the explanation of the
τελείωσις = accusative infinitive of.
Gr. 803. obs. 1. 3.

παρρησίαν] Cf. chap. ii. 28.

τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς κρίσεως = ὅταν φανερωθῇ
'Ihsou's of chap. ii. 28. The perfect
development of love in its results is
reserved for the day of judgment, but
this, though belonging to the next
world, throws its shadow on the loving
heart in this.

ὅτι . . . τούτῳ] ἐκεῖνος is Christ.

ἐστὶ] The love of Christ, though
exhibited in the world during His
ministry, is a thing of the present and
not of the past.

ἐσμεν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ] We now
in this present state of things are
assimilated to Christ, inasmuch as
we live in love, in the spirit and
pattern of that love which He exhi-
bited no less in His mission than in
His ministrations on earth. Here
our practical conformity to Christ is
spoken of as the ground for that
assurance which springs from perfect
love to Christ.

18. φόβος . . . ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ] To
show that τελεία ἀγάπη will give us
παρρησία in the day of judgment, he
shows the negative relations between
love and fear.

φόβος . . . ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ] Fear does
not enter into love, and perhaps it is
the only energy of our moral nature
with which fear is not connected.
φόβος is the contrary of παρρησία—
fear of the judge. The feeling of
love does not give rise to nor is it ac-
companied by fear; it is the contra-
diction to fear. It cannot be said to
use the argument 'Who shall condemn

us, &c.?' for the notion of condemna-
tion is not suggested by love, but is
foreign to it. It feels that God will
give us all good things; and when
this love is perfectly developed, then,
if any fear arises from or in the other
parts of our moral nature, love casts
it out of our souls.

ὅτι . . . ἔχει] and for this reason:
fear implies the notion of punishment,
love the notion of pardon and accept-
ance. ἔχει κόλασιν not merely brings
with it a painful feeling which is in
itself punishment, but *implies in itself
the notion of punishment*, for where
there is no punishment there can be
no fear. τελεία, not merely *pure*,
real, but love when it has attained
its perfect development in us. ἔξω
βάλλει, casts out of our soul. τὸν
φόβον, the fear we are speaking of.
The ἀγάπη must be τελεία, i.e. be
composed of faith towards God in
Christ (v. 15) and brotherly love (v.
12). The notion which St. John is
here setting forth may thus be illus-
trated. Though love continually
keeps God before our thoughts, yet it
is not with anything of fear, for it
brings Him before our souls as the
Pardoner of sin, and not as the Judge
of sinners. Supposing death suddenly
presents itself to a man, say in a
shipwreck, the feeling that he is about
to die will naturally suggest a fearful
apprehension of the day of judgment;
but if the principle of love towards
God and man has been developed in
the inner man, it will straightway
assure him that he has nothing to
fear.

ὁ δὲ φοβούμενος . . . ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ]

ἔχει· ὁ δὲ φοβούμενος οὐ τετελείωται ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ.

φοβούμενος marks the continuance and permanence of the feeling. If a man finds that he thinks of God with fear, it is a proof that the principle of love has not yet attained its development and perfection in the soul; that either his love towards God, or his love towards man, is not as complete and perfect as it ought to be. It is the foreboding of his conscience, and a warning to him to work out his salvation; and as no man, as long as he lives, can have perfect love towards God and man, as the best he can do is but an approach to this state of perfection, it follows that he must fear, more or less, and this fear will be more or less as his love is more or less developed within him, more or less a real principle of his life. The passage practically proves the imperfection of man under the most perfect development he can attain to. This is not merely a repetition of the foregoing in a negative form, but a new proposition, having a practical bearing on the inner and outer life. As love increases fear decreases. As fear gains ground it marks that love in one or other of its two elements—faith in God, love in Christ, or practical love towards man—is waxing faint. Or it may be only a general proposition illustrating the nature of perfect love by a characteristic of its opposite, 'fear.'

It is to be observed that the apostle does not say ὁ μὴ φοβούμενος τετελείωται ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ, though such an antithetical statement would have harmonised well with the general form in which such doctrines are put forth in this Epistle. Want of fear of the day of account may proceed from other causes besides love of

God.

φόβος] where it is spoken of as existing in the Christian's mind, is not so much fear of God as of oneself. Though inasmuch as perfect love is unattainable in this life, fear of God as a Judge is spoken of in Scripture as a necessary element of the Christian's life; but supposing a man whose practical love gives him reason for believing that the love of God abides in him and he in it—supposing, I say, such a man—he cannot from the very instincts of his nature, and his consciousness of his sinfulness and sins, help feeling occasionally fear of the judgment of God; still his love being more or less *τελεία*, built up on faith and love, which = the keeping the commandments of God, reassures him. But if it is not *τελεία*, i.e. if it fails either in respect of faith or practice (v. 12), then it cannot reassure him, and if he is reassured it must be only a delusion of his soul, or a snare of Satan to keep him from Christ. φόβος is to be excluded by *τελεία ἀγάπη*, developed in love towards God, founded on and implying faith and practical love of man, *ἔργον μὴ λόγον*.

If we take the case of a believer *φοβούμενος*, it is clearly a call to him to develop his *ἀγάπη*, or, more properly speaking, to allow the Holy Spirit to develop his *ἀγάπη* more perfectly. It is a proof to him that *οὐ τετελείωται ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ*; most probably in both of the parts thereof. He needs more *πίστις*, a deeper remembrance and sense of God's love to him, and more love towards God. He wants more *ἀγάπη εἰς ἀλλήλους*. Fear must not make him despair; it is to him a message of God's will for

ἡμεῖς ἀγαπῶμεν αὐτόν, ὅτι αὐτὸς πρῶτος ἡγάπησεν 19
ἡμᾶς. Ἐάν τις εἴπῃ, 'Ὅτι ἀγαπῶ τὸν Θεόν,' καὶ 20
τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ μισῇ, ψεύστης ἐστίν· ὁ γὰρ μὴ

him, a summons to go on to higher degrees of perfection in the strength of God's will for him.

Take the case of a believer μὴ φοβούμενος; it is a sign that he fancies his ἀγάπη is τελεία already, or at the very least it is the witness of his own spirit only, and he must enquire whether the Spirit also bears witness to the same effect; whether he has ἀγάπη εἰς ἀλλήλους. The case of one who does not do this is given in v. 20. Of course if our ἀγάπη is becoming weaker, if our faith in God is sinking, and our ἀγάπη εἰς ἀλλήλους falling away, then φόβος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως increases. If a man feels his fear of God as a judge daily becoming stronger, then he has reason to doubt his being in a state of salvation; but the man who is distressed because he thinks he does not love God enough to be saved, may regard it as evidence of the intensity of his love that he is not satisfied with it. Let him try the reality of his love by his ἀγάπη εἰς ἀλλήλους.

19. ἡμεῖς . . . ἡμᾶς] True Christian love, which, when developed, becomes τελεία ἀγάπη, is founded on the love of God for us, and, as God loved us before we loved Him, the existence of ἀγάπη implies that we have no cause to fear Him: as far as God's love is concerned we can have no fear if we love Him. This is another proof of the statement that perfect love excludes fear, and therefore gives us παρρησία. In proportion as we love Him really we must have realised His prior love for us, and in proportion as we realise His love for us, fear becomes out of the question.

πρῶτος] This is an important addition. If God's love was in return for ours we could not be certain whether such love as we could offer Him would excite His love for us; but when it is viewed as an antecedent condition of our love to Him, then of course it is implied in it. ἡγάπησεν, past tense, referring to the past act of God's love in sending Christ.

20. εἰάν τις . . . ἐστίν] This is the case of μὴ φοβούμενος on the ground of his own notion of his own spiritual state. If in the practical relations of life he has not brotherly love, which must be joined with this to make true ἀγάπη, he takes an untrue view.

μισῇ] = μὴ ἀγαπᾷ.

ὁ γὰρ . . . ἀγαπᾶν] The form of the question (πῶς δύναται) refers it to the reason of the reader. 'It is absurd to suppose that he,' &c. As the love of the invisible God requires a greater mental energy than the love of the visible creature, it is contrary to reason (πῶς δύναται) that a man should claim the harder mental energy while the easier is out of the reach, whether of his will or of his power it matters not which, for the power depends on the will, and the will up to a certain point on the power. It is true that the love of God is the source and necessary condition of Christian love of man, and yet this has its basis in the natural tendency of man to love man, though this being stifled by sin and self requires the love of God to develope and perfect it. A man cannot rise to the love of God unless he have the love of man, but this latter does not

ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ὃν ἐώρακε, τὸν Θεὸν ὃν
 21 οὐχ ἐώρακε, πῶς δύναται ἀγαπᾶν; καὶ ταύτην τὴν
 ἐντολὴν ἔχομεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, ἵνα ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν Θεόν,
 ἀγαπᾷ καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ.

V. ΠΑΣ ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός, ἐκ

rise to the dignity and purity of a Christian grace until it is elevated and purified by the former. A man who has no affections towards those whom he sees can have no affection for one whom he has not seen. There are two reasons why the want of the love of God argues the want of the love of man. 1. The love of man is the foundation, the root of the love of God, and therefore the latter cannot exist without the former. 2. The love of man flows from the love of God, therefore if the former does not exist, neither does the latter. ἐώρακε, the pft. marks the permanent state.

21. καὶ . . . αὐτοῦ] The apostle adds one more argument to those which he has already adduced, drawn

from the nature of love and the relations between the two, to show the necessary connection between the love of God and the love of man, both being necessary elements of the Christian character and conditions of salvation, and the Christian scheme of redemption. He now speaks of it as a positive command from God, apart from any logical or moral necessity for their being viewed as implied and implying each other, that whoever pretends to the love of God should love his brethren.

ἵνα ἀγαπᾷ] conjunctive for infinitive (Gr. 803. obs. 1. 3).

The argument of this chapter from v. 7 may be succinctly stated thus:—

1. { All love is of God, and therefore love of brethren is of God, v. 7.
 He who lacks ἀγάπη knows not God, and therefore cannot love Him. v. 8.
2. God loved us, and therefore we ought to love each other. v. 11.
3. If we do not love each other we cannot be sure that we love God, from the witness of *the Spirit being necessary to this assurance*. v. 13.
4. Unless we love one another, we cannot have that assurance which ought to spring from ἀγάπη, for this *arises from our practical conformity to Christ*. v. 16.
5. The love of God is a greater energy of ἀγάπη than the love of man; and therefore, if we have not the less difficult one, we cannot lay claim to the more difficult. v. 20.
6. Love of the brethren is a positive command of God. v. 21.
 The love of God is the causal ground
 The love of man is the evidential ground } of assurance.

1. πᾶς . . . αὐτοῦ] St. John gives another reason for brotherly love, grounded on the position in which faith puts man, arising from Chris-

tians being born spiritually of the same Father.

πᾶς . . . ὁ Χριστός] Faith is hereby briefly but comprehensively given in

τοῦ Θεοῦ γεγέννηται· καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν γεννήσαντα ἀγαπᾷ καὶ τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐξ αὐτοῦ. ἐν 2
τούτῳ γνωσκομεν ὅτι ἀγαπῶμεν τὰ τέκνα τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὅταν τὸν Θεὸν ἀγαπῶμεν, καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν. αὕτη γάρ ἐστιν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἵνα 3

its prominent characteristic, believing that He Who was known on earth by His human name Jesus, was the Christ. He at first contemplates faith existing merely as belief, disjoined from its fruits of love, because he is going to speak of love as necessarily implied in it. The two notions are conceivably distinct, though in practice coincident.

ἐκ τοῦ . . . γεγέννηται] This faith is the work of the Holy Spirit, and therefore shows that the new birth has in some degree, at least, taken effect. It is not only that the faithful is adopted as a child, but he has a new nature put in him.

γεγέννηται] is in a regenerate state. καὶ πᾶς . . . αὐτοῦ] This new birth of God includes and implies in the believer love towards the Father Who has begotten him, and hence by the ordinary laws of man's moral nature, love towards them who are begotten of the same Father; if a man says he loves God, he must admit that he is bound to love his brother also. In all these passages St. John seems to be contemplating cases in which a man would disjoin faith and brotherly love.

2. ἐν τούτῳ . . . ἀγαπῶμεν] So closely are the ἀγάπη Θεοῦ and the ἀγάπη ἀλλήλων connected, that our really loving the brethren, that is, our love towards others, not being mere selfish love, or even benevolence, or fancy, or arising from any of those motives whence human love springs, is surely tested by our loving God. If

we love God, then we know that we love the brethren as in Christ, and for Christ's sake.

καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς τηρῶμεν] St. John, in order to prevent it being supposed that merely the feeling of love towards God was meant, merely experimental love, adds this practical clause, showing that there is another test to be applied before we can be sure of the reality and purity of our brotherly love, viz., if our love towards God is of such a sort as makes us keep His commandments. There is no necessity for supposing that the subject and predicate are transposed here, and that St. John really meant to say that he who loves his brother also loves God, though at first there seems a difficulty from the fact that in other passages we are told that one of God's commandments is to love one another, but then it would seem as if St. John had written 'we know we love the brethren, when we love God and love the brethren.' All that St. John means here is to guard against it being supposed that mere experimental or sensational love towards God is what he is speaking of, and not rather practical love working in obedience; not merely sensational love toward the brethren, but practical in all the particulars of obedience.

3. αὕτη . . . τηρῶμεν] And in this verse he states the practical nature of the feeling towards God more distinctly, as the reason why he added the last clause of verse 2. καὶ αἱ ἐντολαὶ . . . εἰσὶν] The

τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν· καὶ αἱ ἐντολαὶ αὐτοῦ
 4 βαρεῖαι οὐκ εἰσίν. ὅτι πᾶν τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ
 Θεοῦ, νικᾷ τὸν κόσμον· καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ νίκη ἡ
 5 νικήσασα τὸν κόσμον, ἡ πίστις ἡμῶν. τίς ἐστιν ὁ
 νικῶν τὸν κόσμον, εἰ μὴ ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς
 6 ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ;

apostle here introduces a new thought, suggested probably by the reflection that among the commandments of God, was that very brotherly love, which he had been impressing on his readers.

4. **ὅτι . . . τὸν κόσμον**] He now gives a reason why God's commandments, including the most difficult of all, love of others instead of love of self, are not heavy and difficult, as most men would think and say they are. The reason is that Christians, being born again of Divine seed into the Divine nature, have in them a power above that of the natural man and the sphere of self in which he lives and moves and has his being (**κόσμον**).

τὸ γεγεννημένον] the *collective neuter* (Gr. 436. 2. d. 4). Cf. John iii. 6, vi. 37, xvii. 2.

νικᾷ] pure present, 'in the strife now going on.'

κόσμον] The sphere in which the Evil Spirit works against the Holy Spirit for our destruction, differing to different men, but especially the sphere of natural self-love. It may be represented in more aspects than one: the sphere of evil, the kingdom of Satan, the kingdom of sin, the kingdom of temptation.

καὶ αὕτη . . . ἡμῶν] That whereby the child of God conquers the world is the result of his new birth, viz., faith. And this faith is more clearly defined in the next verse.

αὕτη] is attracted to **πίστις**, as not uncommon in Greek (Gr. 657. 2. b. fin.).

νίκη] It may be observed that **πίστις** is said **νικᾷ**, and also to be the **νίκη**. In fact, **νίκη** ἡ **νικήσασα** is somewhat a confusion of terms, but it expresses emphatically how completely **πίστις** is the mental power whereby war is victoriously waged over the world, and that the victory consists in the subjugation of the world to the authority of **πίστις**.

νικήσασα] is merely the aoristic adjective = the Latin 'victrix' (Gr. 405. 3. obs. 3). **πίστις** is not the result of the victory, but the victory and the victor. We may observe that the victory over the world is ascribed to—(1) our new birth of God, including a new moral nature; (2) our faith, or definitely a new intellectual nature.

5. **τίς . . . Θεοῦ**] The faith spoken of is here more clearly defined. It is not merely a general vague faith in God, which must exist more or less even in natural religion, but the definite persuasion and trust that Jesus is the Son of God. For the negative interrogative form, see chap. ii. v. 22.

6-12. The grounds of this faith, so all-important, are briefly given.

6. **οὗτος . . . ὁ Χριστός**] The object and grounds of this faith are briefly but forcibly stated. Faith is so essential an element, or rather so indispensable a foundation of the Christian character, that St. John again and again recurs to it.

οὗτος] refers to **ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ**, 'this

Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἐλθὼν δι' ὕδατος καὶ αἵματος, Ἰη-

Son of God' is He, &c., &c. Others take it as referring to Ἰησοῦς, but that Jesus was baptised and crucified was an acknowledged fact. The point to be insisted on as against Jews, Gentiles, and certain heretics was that He thus came, viz., Jesus the Christ, or, the Messiah was and is the Son of God. Cf. the confession of St. Peter, Matt. xvi. v. 16.

ὁ ἐλθὼν] is simply a predicative personal substantive in the participial form: the aorist being used in the simple aoristic force (Gr. 705. 6. b. a. 405. 3. obs. 3).

δι' ὕδατος καὶ αἵματος] There are a great number of interpretations of this most difficult passage: (1) The water and the blood which flowed from our Lord's pierced side (Aug. and most of the old interpreters), as being evidence of His actual death, or as types of baptism and the Lord's Supper. (2) The sacraments. (3) The water signifying our Lord's baptism; the blood, His death (Tertullian, Theophylact, &c.). (4) The water signifying the sacrament of baptism; the blood, Christ's death; and others which it is not worth while to mention.

We may observe the ὕδωρ and the αἷμα are not as yet spoken of as witnesses, but as circumstances which accompanied our Lord's mission on earth. ἐλθὼν διὰ expresses properties or qualities (Gr. 627. I. 3. b.), or accompaniments (Gr. 627. I. 3. d.) of the action expressed by ἐλθὼν, and therefore it is in our Lord's mission on earth that we must find the meaning of ὕδωρ and αἷμα, not in anything that He instituted, or in anything merely viewed as an evidence; they must express characteristics of Him on

earth. In our Lord's life as the Messiah, there are two circumstances in which the notions of water and blood find a place. One in His baptism, which was, as it were, His inauguration into the Messianic office, the first step in fulfilling God's will as the Christ, a fulfilling of all righteousness. The other in His death on the cross, which was the last act of His mission on earth as the Redeemer. It may be observed that δι' ὕδατος is the more difficult to assign a certain meaning to. Everybody probably would at once connect δι' αἵματος with His death, and whatever sense we give to this we must give an analogous one to δι' ὕδατος, so that we may not suppose the former to mean a circumstance belonging to Christ, and the latter a rite instituted by him. The best interpretation then is, He whose Messianic mission was characterised by the baptism of water and the blood of the cross. Some think that St. John may have been led to the mention of the water and blood, by what he relates in chap. xix. 34, and possibly may have had in his mind the water and blood of the two sacraments. But this notion is a needless refinement on and addition to the passage, which adds nothing to its force, and confuses its meaning.

Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστός] This is in apposition, 'Jesus the Messiah.'

οὐκ ἐν τῷ . . . αἵματι] If Jesus' mission had been marked only by His baptism, He might have been merely a Prophet, coming from God indeed, to save man by a moral system. It is His blood shed on the cross which gives the Christian scheme its characteristic of redemption, and there-

σοῦς ὁ Χριστός· οὐκ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι μόνον, ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ
 ὕδατι καὶ τῷ αἵματι· καὶ τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι τὸ μαρτυροῦν
 7 ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν ἡ ἀλήθεια. ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν
 8 οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ

fore it is thus emphatically stated by St. John.

τῷ ὕδ. . . . τῷ αἵμ.] The article marks the identity of each with the water and blood mentioned above.

καὶ τὸ . . . μαρτυροῦν] There are also a variety of interpretations given to this word, but τὸ πνεῦμα commonly refers to the Holy Ghost, Who bore witness to Christ's mission, either in His miracles or in the day of Pentecost, or perhaps both.

τὸ μαρτυροῦν] not only μαρτῖρ, but actually bearing witness, while the participial form preserves the personality when contrasted with the possible expression ὁ μαρτυρεῖ.

ὅτι . . . ἀλήθεια] The force of the witness borne by the Spirit lies in the fact that He is very Truth itself, and therefore cannot deceive or be deceived.

7. ὅτι τρεῖς . . . τὸ ἐν εἰσιν] The testimony of the Holy Ghost to the Divine mission of our Lord as the Son of God, gives to the circumstances of His baptism and death the character of witnesses. If the Holy Ghost had not borne this witness, the baptism and death would only have been facts in our Lord's work, but now His baptism, in which He solemnly was dedicated to the work, and His death, whereby He accomplished the work of redemption, testify to His Divine office as the redeeming Son of God, and may be used by Christians to confirm their faith in this doctrine. If He had not been baptised by John, He might have been supposed to have taken

this office on Himself, instead of being sent by the Father. If He had not suffered on the cross as He did suffer, the work of redemption might have been the result of His teaching on each man's soul, and therefore personal trust in Him as the atoning Redeemer would not have presented itself to the Christian's soul. The real value of our Lord's baptism and His death may be estimated by supposing that neither had taken place, and that our Lord had appeared on His mission without openly professing His mission from God in submitting to the baptism of John; or that He had died quietly as other men die. We should then understand why St. John emphatically speaks of them as corroborative witnesses to His divine mission, the main evidence, however, of which is the witness of the Spirit. Now whether we look to the beginning of His mission or the end of it, or to the working of the Spirit without measure in His miracles, and the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the Divine character of His person and His mission is definitely and distinctly presented to us to produce the faith which overcomes the world.

οἱ μαρτυροῦντες] not merely οἱ μαρτῖρες, witnesses 'in posse,' but actually energising witnesses, 'in esse et agere.' The masculine, however, preserves and brings out their substantial character.

The same notion of personality is also given by the participle when contrasted with the possible phrase

αἷμα· καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἔν εισιν. Εἰ τὴν μαρ- 9
τυρίαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαμβανόμεν, ἡ μαρτυρία
τοῦ Θεοῦ μέζων ἐστίν· ὅτι αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία

οἱ μαρτυροῦσιν. Cf. τὸ μαρτυροῦν
above.

8. εἰς τὸ ἔν] either expressive of their unity, as it is translated in our version (Gr. 625. 3. obs. 4), or the aim or purpose, 'tend to one thing' (Gr. 625. 3 d.). The latter perhaps is the better of the two, unless the disputed words in this passage (ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ Πατήρ, ὁ Λόγος, καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἔν εισιν. καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ) are retained, when of course the former will be the more suitable to the context.

9. εἰ τὴν . . . μέζων ἐστίν] This may be taken in two ways—it may express merely a general principle that men, who receive human testimony on any subject as a sufficient ground of belief, cannot consistently refuse to receive the testimony of God given by the three witnesses spoken of above, because the point to which these bear witness objectively bears witness subjectively to itself in every man's heart; and this is the usual interpretation of the whole passage; but it seems rather weak. Another and a better explanation is to take the *μαρτυρία ἀνθρώπων* as the objective testimony of men, from whom the early Christians generally received the facts of our Lord's baptism and crucifixion, and the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. St. John goes on to point out that this is not the only ground for the Christian's belief, for he has a witness direct from God in his mental power having been moulded into faith. The fact of his belief in Christ is an

evidence of Christ's being the Son of God. The true Christian who is in the full possession of faith does not depend only or chiefly on the testimony of others, though of course he both needs and has this also. The higher evidence is a result of the lower, but still something besides and beyond it. The grounds of faith are thus, first, evidential, in that the facts of our Lord's life are the grounds of belief; and, secondly, experimental, in that the existence of this faith is a proof of its reality.

ὅτι . . . αὐτοῦ] ὅτι gives the reason why the preceding clause is introduced. 'I use this argument because this is the witness,' &c.

αὕτη] either referring backward, viz., that Christ is the Son of God. This is the point to which witness is here borne. *μαρτυρία* is either the act of witnessing, or the matter to which witness is given; some refer it backward to the witness of the water, the blood, and the spirit. But this *μαρτυρία* is spoken of as being self-existing in the mind of the faithful, whereas the three witnesses witness from without. Or *αὕτη* may refer forward to the clause beginning with *ἢ* or *ὅτι*, whichever of these readings we take. The former seems preferable, because this is the point whereof the believer has the witness in himself, whereas in the latter way *αὕτη* is merely a demonstrative to the clause to which it refers forward.

ἢ] ὅτι. L.T. If *ἢ*, then it is simply a pleonastic attribute of the *μαρτυρία Θεοῦ*, really laying emphasis on the

ΙΟ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἣν μεμαρτύρηκε περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ.
ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἔχει τὴν μαρτυ-
ρίαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ. ὁ μὴ πιστεύων τῷ Θεῷ ψεύστην
πεποίθηκεν αὐτόν, ὅτι οὐ πεπίστευκεν εἰς τὴν μαρτυ-

fact that the witness is direct from God. If ὅτι, then the fact to which God bears witness in the believer's heart is that He has borne witness of His Son. This it is which God impresses on the believer's heart as a great truth, that the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ is one of which there is abundant evidence, so that what may be called the experimental evidence is not so much directly of the Divinity of Christ itself, but rather a feeling and impression which disposes the mind *à priori* to receive the evidence of the Apostles and Evangelists to the facts which testify the reality of the doctrine. This is more in harmony as well with the general principles of psychology and the laws of belief, as with the general mode of God's dealings, whereby instruments are commonly used in influencing mens' hearts, rather than any direct impressing the doctrine itself on the intellectual and moral nature of man. Thus our Saviour worked by miracles, God disposing the hearts of those in whom He deigned to work to receive the truth to which the miracles bore witness; while those whose souls, owing to their own hardness of heart and obstinate refusal of God's Spirit, were blinded, could not see the force of the miracles. It is not that the Christian believes without any external evidence, for this would be enthusiasm, but the external evidence finds in him a willing and favourable disposition. The objective or external evidence is enough to produce faith, unless there is hardness of heart such

as prevented the Jews from receiving Christ. But when the objective evidence has produced faith, then there is in the soul an internal subjective evidence which confirms, strengthens, vivifies it. So in assurance also.

μεμαρτύρηκε] bears and continues to bear. The evidence is perpetual and abiding.

ΙΟ. ὁ πιστεύων . . ἑαυτῷ] τὴν μαρτυρίαν, this witness, the witness just spoken of. Besides the external evidence he has an impression of the truth which arises from and adds to his faith. His faith is to him, over and above the definite grounds thereof a witness to itself, not without these grounds but besides and above them. The interpreters of one of the extreme schools' take these words to mean—he who believes in Christ has in himself, in his own experience, an evidence of Christ's work on and in him. But there is no mention of this work here, but that to which μαρτυρίαι of various kinds are directed is the Divinity of Christ.

ὁ μὴ . . . αὐτοῦ] He who, on the other hand, rejects the evidence external and internal which God has given (μὴ πιστεύων τῷ Θεῷ) must hold God to be a liar. We must observe that St. John is not speaking of an absolute infidel who rejects Christianity altogether as a myth, but one who, accepting Christianity as a Divine revelation, refuses to receive Christ as the Son of God. Now, as the miraculous facts of our Saviour's life, which he must receive if he receives anything, bear witness to the Divine

ρίαν, ἣν μεμαρτύρηκεν ὁ Θεὸς περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ. 11
 Καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία ὅτι ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔδωκεν
 ἡμῖν ὁ Θεός· καὶ αὕτη ἡ ζωὴ ἐν τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ ἐστίν.
 ὁ ἔχων τὸν υἱόν, ἔχει τὴν ζωὴν· ὁ μὴ ἔχων τὸν υἱόν 12
 τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὴν ζωὴν οὐκ ἔχει.

nature of Christ, he does, if he disbelieves that doctrine, virtually make out that God, Who sent these signs and wonders, did so in order to deceive men; that in them God has set forth as truth that which is no truth. The *μαρτυρία* which God has borne to the Divine nature of the Son is patent on the face of the Gospel, and, if it is not believed, it is implied that God has given false *μαρτυρία*.

11. καὶ . . . Θεός] The subjective evidence which is thus borne either directly to the reality of the objective evidence of Christ's being the Son of God (if *ὅτι* is the reading in v. 9) or as an addition to it (if *ἣν*) consists in this, that according to the Christian scheme God has given to us everlasting life; and this gift of everlasting life is so in harmony with the higher instincts and desires of the soul that the soul acknowledges its truth, just as it recognizes and acknowledges, *proprio motu*, the existence of God. And the eternal life depends, according to the Christian scheme, on the Son of God having sacrificed Himself for us. καὶ αὕτη . . . ἐστίν] This gift of everlasting life depends on the Son of God; that is, it is in the Christian scheme indissolubly bound up with the divine Sonship of Christ (John i. 4, ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν). This eternal life has its origin and being in the Son of God.

12. ὁ ἔχων . . . [ζωήν] He who clings to and believes in, so as to have as it were possession and fast hold of,

the Son of God, i.e., He who receives Christ as the Son of God has the life which God thus gives in the Christian scheme.

ὁ μὴ ἔχων . . . οὐκ ἔχει] He who does not by faith possess and hold to the Son of God as the mediator of the New Covenant, but who thinks that it was given us by the hands of a mere man called Christ, he, of course, has no share in the gift which the Christian scheme represents as given to men by the hands of the Son of God Himself. In fact the great heresy of St. John's time was not a disbelief in the Gospel as *the* scheme of religion, but a disbelief in the Divine nature of Jesus—a disbelief that the Gospel was brought upon earth by the Son of God—and this is also the heresy of modern times.

13. ταῦτα ἔγραψα ὑμῖν] ταῦτα may either refer to the contents of the whole Epistle, or to what immediately precedes. The object is the same, and perhaps on the whole, occupying the place it does, it is better to take it as being spoken of the whole Epistle. The object of St. John was to show them the real nature of the Gospel, as giving everlasting life, or, what is the better, giving them the grounds of assurance and faith.

ἵνα εἰδῇτε] Either to give them the knowledge of, to impress upon them the fact that they have eternal life, to call to their minds the privileges within their reach, or more definitely that they might have the assurance of

13 ΤΑΥΤΑ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, ἵνα εἰδῆτε ὅτι ζωὴν ἔχετε αἰώνιον, πιστεύοντες εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ.

14 Καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ παρρησία ἣν ἔχομεν πρὸς αὐτόν, ὅτι ἕάν τι αἰτώμεθα κατὰ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ, ἀκούει ἡμῶν.

the gift being theirs. If the words τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ are to be retained in the text, then it would seem as if the object could not be to give them that which they possessed already, and this is more likely to be the real interpretation if, instead of καὶ ἵνα πιστεύητε, we are to read πιστεύοντες, as the καὶ ἵνα πιστεύητε seems to oblige us to suppose that τοῖς πιστεύουσι κ.τ.λ. is an interpolation, as why should he try to give them that which they already have. Whereas, if the creation of πίστις is the definite object of the apostle, the words ἵνα εἰδῆτε cannot refer to *assurance*, which must follow on πίστις and not πίστις on it. Without πίστις it would be impossible for any one to have assurance; but it would be quite logical if we suppose the apostle to be impressing on them the privilege of everlasting life which is within their reach, and to speak of πίστις as a result of the knowledge of those principles; unless we are to look upon the πίστις spoken of as the object of the Epistle as a higher degree of faith following on assurance. But there is nothing in the phrase nor yet in the context to make such an interpretation sufficiently necessary to be reasonable. St. John has so often in the Epistle referred to the grounds of our knowing that we know God (i.e., of assurance) that it would seem as if this would be stated here as one of the special objects in writing, whether we take it to refer to the whole Epistle or to the part immediately preceding it. The most satisfactory way of reading and interpret-

ing the passage is to omit the τοῖς πιστεύουσιν κ.τ.λ., and to read πιστεύοντες instead of καὶ ἵνα πιστεύητε. πιστεύοντες would then refer not to εἰδῆτε, 'that ye may know that in believing ye have life,' and this reading of the whole passage has sufficiently the authority of MSS. to justify its being received instead of our reading. If the other reading is the true one, it is not easy to work out a logical and consistent meaning from it. I have written to believers that ye may have assurance of life, and thus be led to believe still more firmly on the Son of God.

14. καὶ αὕτη . . . ἡμῶν] One of the most especial points and privileges of the ζωὴ αἰώνιος is the access to and communion with God, the power and the privilege of conversing with him without fear. This rather points to its being *assurance* which is spoken of in the phrase above, ἵνα εἰδῆτε, though it might follow logically enough, though not so logically and immediately on the mere possession of πίστις.

αὕτη] either refers to what precedes, being attracted from the neuter by παρρησία, 'this (assurance) is the confidence in which we approach God in prayer, because we know,' &c., or it may refer prospectively to παρρησία, which is explained by the sentence introduced by ὅτι (Gr. 657. 2. b. sub. fin.). The παρρησία (which results from faith or from assurance) consists in this, 'that we know,' &c. He seems to be referring to the privilege which he had spoken of in iii. 21 as the result of assurance, viz., confidence in

καὶ ἐὰν οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀκούει ἡμῶν, ὃ ἂν αἰτώμεθα, οἶδα- 15
μεν ὅτι ἔχομεν τὰ αἰτήματα ἃ ἡτήκαμεν παρ' αὐτοῦ.
'Εάν τις ἴδῃ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἁμαρτάνοντα ἁμαρτίαν 16

prayer. He wishes to reiterate and impress upon their minds the great privilege which arose from a well-grounded assurance that God would hear their prayer, iii. 21. If our heart, looking into all the circumstances, experimental and practical, of our spiritual state, passes a verdict in favour of our being at peace with God (iii. 21), if we know on good grounds that we have eternal life, then we enjoy that *παρησία*, that freedom of communication with God, the essence of which is our certainty that He hears us. καὶ marks that this is not the beginning of a new thought, but arises from what has gone before. This *παρησία* is part of the *ζωὴ αἰώνιος*. Or καὶ may simply be 'further,' introducing a further privilege as resulting from the assurance of which he had been writing; his object being to show the nature and ground of that assurance.

πρὸς αὐτόν] sc. God.

κατὰ τὸ θέλημα] Here is the limitation of reasonable expectation of our prayers being heard and answered. Our prayers must square with His will. If we ask for things contrary to His will, or not in the way He wills, we have no reason to look for what we ask for. Cf. Jas. iv. 3. In Luke xxii. 42 we have an instance of even our Saviour's praying not being heard.

15. καὶ ἐάν . . . παρ' αὐτοῦ (ἐάν with Indic. Gr. 853, 2. obs. 5). In the notion of God's hearing us is, in Scriptural language, implied the notion of our prayers being answered and our requests granted. Of course it is merely a human way of speaking

of God.

ὃ ἂν αἰτώμεθα] stands as the accusative in quasi-apposition at the beginning of a sentence which contains a fuller and more accurate description thereof (Gr. 581. 1).

16. ἐάν τις . . . πρὸς θάνατον]

The best way of accounting for the introduction of this dogmatic statement in this place is to view it as an instance given by the apostle among many others which he might have given, of a case in which a prayer, being κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ, will be heard, and one in which, not being κατὰ τὸ θέλημα, it will not be heard. Of course its doctrinal value is not the least altered, but it at first comes upon us rather unexpectedly, without connection with the context.

ἐάν τις ἴδῃ] If any stress is to be laid upon this form it must be that a frequently recurring, though at the moment a supposed, case is spoken of.

ἀδελφόν] a Christian brother, not merely a neighbour.

μὴ πρὸς θάνατον] 'if it is not unto death.' The apostle here distinguishes between ἁμαρτία μὴ πρὸς θάνατον and ἁμαρτία πρὸς θάνατον, and moreover supposes that the one is ordinarily distinguishable from the other. The question is: What is the nature of these, and what the characteristic of either one, whereby one is distinguished from the other?

In the LXX the ἁμαρτία θανατηφόρος was the sin of which death was the penalty under the Mosaic law; but from the sense of θάνατος here the notion of bodily death is excluded by the words δώσει αὐτῷ ζωὴν.

μὴ πρὸς θάνατον, αἰτήσῃ, καὶ δώσῃ αὐτῷ ζωήν,

Another interpretation similarly excluded is, those sins which God punished with bodily sickness. Nor again can it be those sins which the Church punished by excommunication, for this would suppose that individuals had the power of neutralising such sentences, which certainly is not consistent with the view of ecclesiastical discipline held by those who favour this interpretation, nor again is it likely that such a formula would in that early age have been invented for this definite class of sins. It must be an actual not a technical term; the elements of which it is made up must have had a real existence in the apostle's mind, and not a merely formal and unreal meaning in ecclesiastical phraseology. *θάνατος* cannot mean bodily death; and if so, it must mean some mental state of which *θάνατος* was the appropriate expression, the spiritual death of the soul. And when and how does this occur to a Christian? Augustin thinks it is a sin which is with great difficulty remitted, '*quodvis peccatum gravissimum quod vix remittatur*,' but the *vix* does not destroy the fact that such a sin *remittetur*, and therefore is not spiritual death. A Lapide: '*Quodvis gravissimum quod per gratiam quam Deus ordinarie dare solet et quasi immedicabile*.' Against which the same objection holds good. It is not any definite single sin or sort of sin, such as certain sins committed after baptism, for there are no such unpardonable sins. 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,' on faith and repentance. So a state of spiritual death can only be that state where repentance and faith are (either of them or both) impossible. There is but one state of sin whereby

a man is brought to be in a state of death, and that is where it excludes the possibility of repentance and faith, which are the two conditions of the sinner being re-invigorated. One of these would be the state, springing from the intellect, which excludes faith, such as the sin against the Holy Ghost, which *ipso facto* prevented a man from receiving Christ, because it prevented his receiving our Lord's miracles as evidence of His Divine mission. The other would be the state springing from lust, whereby the desire for anything better than fleshly and worldly enjoyment, which is the foundation of repentance, is utterly extinguished. In either of these cases, there is spiritual death, as far as we can judge, and it is to man's judgment that the matter must be referred; and the sins spoken of must be some act of the mind or the tongue, or the hand, which indicates a man's being in such and such a deadly state, or which is bringing him into such a state. If a man sees a brother sin a sin which, in his judgment (and the word ἵδη implies the exercise of judgment in each case), is in this sense a sin unto death, then he is not to use the privilege of prayer for it; it would be a useless abuse of that privilege, and not a fruitful use thereof. Against this interpretation it is urged that a sin does not necessarily bear on its face any indication as to whether it is repented of or not, and that if St. John's words are to have any practical bearing, the deadly nature of the sin must be patent. But first of all it may be doubted whether St. John ever really intended the words to have any application except in the way of illustrating the use and abuse

τοῖς ἁμαρτάνουσι μὴ πρὸς θάνατον. ἔστιν ἁμαρτία

of the privilege of prayer; and, secondly, if this is not held, it may be answered that St. John is speaking of a sin which in a man's sober judgment seems to him to be a sin unto death, and that it is not necessary with reference to that judgment to define exactly what the sin is, though the enquiry is forced upon us by the intensely interesting nature of the subject; so that it is not necessary to St. John's purpose here that the sin unto death should have its nature written on its face in unmistakeable characters, and it is not a decisive objection to any interpretation of the nature of such a sin that it is not sufficiently clear to prevent a wrong judgment being formed on it. The essence of the point, as far as St. John's teaching is concerned, is not the nature of the sin, but of the view taken of it. And in this respect of the judgment formed of it, acts of sin must differ according to circumstances, all of which must be weighed before a morally true judgment can be formed. 'Some men's sins go before unto judgment;' they are unmistakeable evidences, as far as we can judge, of the inner state. It must be observed also that St. John speaks rather of a favourable and charitable judgment formed of the sin being *μὴ πρὸς θάνατον*, than of an unfavourable judgment of its being *πρὸς θάνατον*. He does not so much contemplate the latter as the former, rather the case in which a man may pray for his brother, than a case in which he cannot. He merely says that the privilege of prayer and his command to pray would in such a case be suspended. He does not say, 'If a man sees a brother sin a sin unto death, he is not to pray for him with the cer-

tainty of life being given to him,' but merely that this would be a case in which prayer could not be rightly used.

αἰτήσῃ] The fut. for the imperative (Gr. 406. 3. obs. 1).

καὶ δώσει αὐτῷ ζωὴν] The subject of *δώσει* may either be *Θεός* supplied (as most interpreters take it) or it may be the same as *αἰτήσῃ*, in the same notion as 'he shall save a soul from death' (Jas. v. 20); but the former seems the best.

αὐτῷ] If *Θεός* is supplied as the subject, *αὐτῷ* may be the person offering the prayer, *ἁμαρτάνουσι* being the *dativus commodi*.

ζωήν] Not as it were a resurrection, for those who are *dead* are excluded by the context, who *ἁμαρτάνουσι πρὸς τὸν θάνατον*, but a fresh supply of that spiritual life, which is more or less weakened and quenched by every sin, in one or other of its phases and energies. Here of course it would mean that repentance and faith which are energies of reviving spiritual life, and which lead a man to Him in Whom true and perfect spiritual life consists, Jesus Christ.

τοῖς ἁμαρτάνουσι] either in apposition to *αὐτῷ*, signifying the class to which he must belong (Gr. 379. b.), or as *dativus commodi* (Gr. 599. 1), if *αὐτῷ* is taken to refer to the person offering the prayer.

ἔστιν ἁμαρτία . . . ἐρωτήσῃ] The apostle now introduces the sin unto death, as an illustration of a point in which we may not feel confidence that prayer will be heard as being *μὴ κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ*. οὐ belongs to *λέγω* not to *ἐρωτήσῃ*. The apostle does not actually forbid prayer in such a case, but does not encourage us to put any confidence in its efficacy.

πρὸς θάνατον· οὐ περὶ ἐκείνης λέγω ἵνα ἐρωτήσῃ·
 17 πᾶσα ἀδικία ἁμαρτία ἐστί· καὶ ἔστιν ἁμαρτία οὐ
 18 πρὸς θάνατον. Οἶδαμεν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ
 τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει· ἀλλ' ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ

Some suppose that a mild prohibition is intended, against which it is objected that, if the negative had been intended to apply to ἐρωτήσῃ, μὴ must have been used; this has no grammatical value (Gr. 745. 2), but there is no scriptural reason why a stronger meaning should be attached to the words than they need bear.

17. πᾶσα . . . θάνατον] The apostle for some reason, probably against some notion of all transgressions of revealed or natural law being exposed to an equal degree of God's wrath, introduces a distinction between them. Every ἀδικία, every breach of right, is a sin, but not equally so.

18. οἶδαμεν . . . ἁμαρτάνει] The conclusion of the Epistle now commences, marked by οἶδαμεν in three following clauses. This seems at first sight to be in direct contradiction of what goes before, that a Christian brother may sin, and yet not wholly lose his spiritual life. To evade this difficulty some supply πρὸς θάνατον τοῦ οὐκ ἁμαρτάνει, or interpret it as habitual sin; but both of these are arbitrary and unsatisfactory. Huther takes it merely as an abstract expression of the opposition between sin and the regenerate man, and thus gets rid of its application to practical and actual life, whence the difficulty arises. If a man sins it is contrary to his regenerate nature. There is something in this, but it is not exact enough. The true solution is found by observing that the perfect γεγεννημένος signifies the state of regeneration, and equals ὁ μένων ἐν τῷ Θεῷ.

This force of the perfect is brought out still more strongly by its contrast with γεννηθεὶς in the next verse. The meaning of it is not only that every sin is a violation of the perfect spiritual life of the Christian, but also that it cannot occur without that inner spiritual life and union with God having in some degree failed; there must have been a falling away from grace through harbouring some sinful thought or desire, before the Christian can sin outwardly. And this illustrates the features of sin as indicating and aggravating this internal defection of life. In other words the Christian's will must have in some way or other grieved or rejected the Spirit of Holiness, whereinto He was born again, and thus undone and resigned so much of his spiritual life and powers; but as long as this life and these powers remain unimpaired by sinful wishes, &c., as long as the Christian uses the strength which is given him, so long and so far is he kept from sin. And this interpretation is in perfect harmony with all the phenomena of spiritual life as we find them in Scripture.

ἀλλ' ὁ γεννηθεὶς . . . ἅπτεται αὐτοῦ] It is impossible to overlook the passive force of the participle γεννηθεὶς as a strong expression of past time contrasted with the form γεγεννημένος expressing a state continuing from the past into the present, 'he who has been born of God.' And hence we perceive the difference between what is said of the γεγεννημένος and of the γεννηθεὶς, of him who

Θεοῦ, τηρεῖ ἑαυτόν, καὶ ὁ πονηρὸς οὐχ ἄπτεται αὐτοῦ. οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐσμεν, καὶ ὁ 19 κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κείται. οἶδαμεν δὲ ὅτι 20 ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ἦκει, καὶ δέδωκεν ἡμῖν διάνοιαν ἵνα γινώσκωμεν τὸν ἀληθινόν· καὶ ἐσμεν ἐν τῷ ἀληθινῷ,

has been born again, and he whose birth of God is a continued state. The γεννηθὲς ἐκ Θεοῦ exists by being a past fact; the γεγεννημένος by virtue of being a present state; and in proportion as it passes away out of the present, it ceases to exist. The two clauses, ὁ γεννηθὲς τηρεῖ ἑαυτόν, καὶ ὁ πονηρὸς οὐχ ἄπτεται αὐτοῦ, though in form co-ordinate, express a subordinate relation of the latter to the former (Gr. 860. 8. 758. 2), = 'If he who has been born of God keeps himself, then'—(καί, Gr. 752. 2).

τηρεῖ ἑαυτόν] The term emphatically marks the part the man himself takes in the work (Gr. 363. 4). The act is his perhaps more than merely in the sense of his having the power not to do. It is an energy of his regenerate will; yet the strength is of the spirit. Cf. 1 Tim. v. 22; καί, cf. Gr. 752. 2.

ὁ πονηρὸς] The Spirit of evil.

οὐχ ἄπτεται] does not injure him.

19. οἶδαμεν . . . κείται] The apostle now gives two leading distinctions between Christians and those who are not Christians. The world is the sphere of the natural man, his powers and affections and desires, and not merely is so, but lies patient and submissive in the power and service of the Devil—the world, both in the sense of those to whom the sphere of the natural man is their all in all, and also that sphere itself. We Christians are from God, our life comes from Him, and is of Him—godly; ourselves, our inner man and outward

sphere is of God.

20. οἶδαμεν . . . ἀληθινόν] Besides the difference in the whole moral nature of the Christian in regard to the sphere in which he lives, and the Prince to which he belongs, there is a difference in his intellect. He has had a power of intellectual apprehension given him whereby he knows the true God, and knows Him to be the true God; and as a result the mission of His Son. The heathens had neither any adequate conception of the true God, nor had they any knowledge whether or not the God they believed in was the true God or not. The Christian in consequence of the revelation of Christ has both these privileges. To know the true God would be imperfect, were not to it the knowledge added, that He whom we worship is the true God.

ἦκει] has come, or is now in the world, both as Head of the Church, and as set forth and speaking by His apostles and evangelists.

ἵνα] = whereby, the aim of the διάνοια.

τὸν ἀληθινόν] The true one, above all, and in contradistinction to, all others; not in regard of His attribute of truth, but of His being the true God.

καὶ ἐσμεν . . . ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ] Christians have an indwelling communion with ὁ ἀληθινός, the true God, by their indwelling communion with His Son. Cf. John, xvii: 21, 'Thou in me, and I in Thee, that they too may be one in us;' v. 23, 'I in them, and

ἐν τῷ νύμφῳ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ. οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ
 21 ἄληθινός Θεός, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ αἰώνιος. Τεκνία, φυλά-
 ξατε ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν εἰδώλων. ἀμήν.

Thou in me, that they may be perfected into one;’ so that the words ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ, are not in apposition to τῷ ἄληθινῳ, but express the mode of communion with God.

οὗτος . . . αἰώνιος] It is a question to whom οὗτος refers, whether to Christ or to Him in Whom we are. Of course it is interpreted according to the doctrinal views of the interpreters; and at first sight it seems as if it were scarcely possible to define it more accurately. But, when we analyse it, it would seem to be enough to weigh the balance in favour of making Χριστός the substantive to which οὗτος refers. For if we substitute for οὗτος that for which the other interpreters make it the pronoun, it will read ‘the true God is the true God,’ which is a tautology which St. John would hardly have admitted into a part of his Epistle, in which, from its being the end, he would strive to be concise. He had already spoken of Him with Whom our communion with Christ places us in communion *as the true one*, and therefore to say again that ὁ ἄληθινός Θεός ἐστιν ὁ ἄληθινός Θεός has about it a sufficient difficulty to make us prefer Χριστός as the noun of οὗτος. On the other hand it may be said that οὗτος refers to πατήρ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ implied in the words τῷ νύμφῳ αὐτοῦ, or, more properly speaking, to the person signified by αὐτοῦ, of whom Christ was the Son; but αὐτοῦ itself only refers to ἄληθινός, so that the difficulty is not got rid of by this suggestion. Moreover Christ is especially called ζωὴ and ζωὴ αἰώνιος, chap. i. 2, John xiv. 6, though of course the same might be equally

predicated of the Trinity either personally or collectively.

21. τεκνία . . . εἰδώλων] Christians thus knowing the true God, the supreme undivided Being, the Creator and Governor of the world, the object of natural religion no less than of revealed religion—the true God as revealing Himself on earth in the separate person of Jesus Christ His Son—must guard against falling into the errors into which the former generations of man had fallen, who, knowing God, had not chosen to retain Him in their knowledge, but had for the glory of God substituted the worship of idols. But this does not seem to follow naturally from the context standing as the conclusion of the Epistle. It would seem to imply a danger arising directly from Jesus having been put forward as the true God; and it may well be that the Spirit had brought before St. John’s mind the danger arising from the fact that this person was spoken of to them as a man like themselves; a fact that might lead them from the Deity of the man Christ Jesus to deifying other creatures, and investing these with Divine attributes, and attributing to them Divine power, and approaching them with prayer and praise, which, though fitting worship in the case of Jesus Christ, would be idolatry addressed to other creatures. And so St. John adds these words to the end of his Epistle, lest the doctrine he had just insisted on should be misused and perverted, as indeed we know from Church history it has been.

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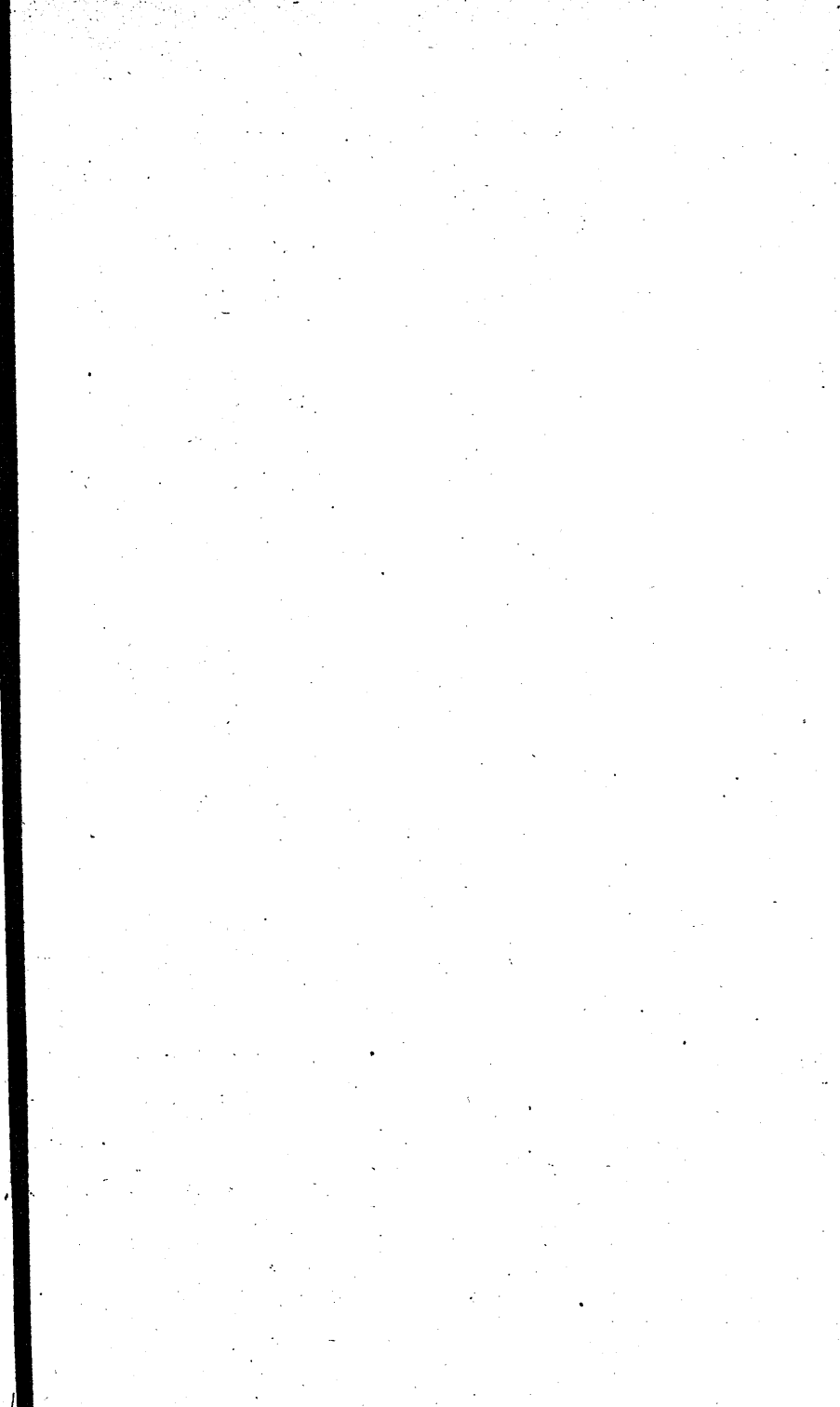
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